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IMPROVEMENT ERA.

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THE ATONEMENT—WHY IT WAS NECESSARY.

BY ELDER CLARK GRAY.

The question is often asked, why did not God enact some other plan to save mankind instead of permitting Jesus Christ to give his life on the cross?

Some who cannot satisfy themselves upon this question, find herein argument against the plan of the scripture, taking the stand that this teaching of atonement is not compatible with the attributes of love and mercy that Christians ascribe to Deity, and that, therefore, the scriptures contradict themselves.

And often, some of our young people are perplexed in contemplating this question, for the alert and inquisitive mind is ever asking the question, "why?"

But others, again, among those who accept the principle of atonement, say that it is presumptuous on the part of man to pretend it necessary to justify an act of God by the wisdom of man. For there are people so constituted that they accept a popular religious principle merely because it comes under the name of religion. And they are prone to manifest a disposition to condemn others who question it.

But it is necessary to have respect for others, and not to condemn even the agnostic too quickly.

The sign of agnosticism is lack of knowledge. The agnostic does not say that he knows there is no God, but merely says that

he does not know there is a God; and that he does not believe that any one else knows. He has not seen, he has not felt, he has not heard; therefore, with Christ we may say: "Seeing, they see not, and hearing, they hear not, neither do they understand." And what is true of one rejecting the whole plan of the scriptures is true, in proportion, of one who rejects the part. Men are skeptical concerning a principle of truth, because they do not see its propriety. Therefore, they must be shown what they have not seen. This is especially true of the subject in hand. Then, recognizing the question, and realizing that it is attacked from a standpoint of human judgment, it may not be improper to answer, or justify, a principle opposed by human wisdom, from a standpoint of human wisdom.

I think that this can be done in no better way than to consider, in the beginning, a statement upon which objectors base their argument, and qualify this statement, if necessary, that it may not assume a meaning other than a true one. The statement is: "There is nothing impossible with God," and, therefore, they argue that God could have enacted some different plan, and thereby obviated the necessity of an atonement. In fact, that he could have effected redemption without a consideration, (atonement).

It is the first part of this statement, (*viz.*, that there is nothing impossible with God) that we will consider and qualify thus: instead of saying that there is nothing impossible with God, let us say that there is nothing impossible with God, except the breaking of law. I hope that none will take exception to this exception. But I wish to explain here that when I speak of law here, I mean fundamental truth which even God himself is subject to. Because I anticipate that some will say that He (God) could have made the laws different. But these laws, with which we are dealing at present, are fundamental laws, a part of truth, (I say a part of truth, because there is other truth besides that which constitutes any one law.) Truth is uncreatable, and, therefore, the parts of truth composing any law were not created, but were simply applied. It was always truth but became law by application, and God himself can not change it, and still retain its effect. This may be illustrated in this way. Every condition has its opposite. It could not exist without an opposite. Light could not be intelligible to

man without its opposite, darkness; sound, without stillness; nor heat without cold. No law could be without its existence in antithesis. In fact, life itself, which is manifest in our senses, is only made possible by the law of contrast. We could not see were it not for light, contrasted with shade. We could not hear, were not sound contrasted with stillness, etc. These are truths which could not be otherwise, and have always been truth, but became law to us when applied to this earth. Then, truth is unchangeable, even outside the power of God to change. God's attitude towards law and truth is emphasized by the words of the Psalmist: "The word of the Lord is right, and all his works are done in truth."

Taking, then, as a fundamental principle, the statement that God cannot break law, we will consider his plan, and his dealings with his children. In the first place, he had an interest in their welfare, and his object was that men might attain joy; in fact, we are taught that man was created that he might have joy. But there are other basic principles that we must consider here, which play a great part in the attainment of joy. One of these is that appreciation comes by paying the price, and another is that power to do is gained by doing. These, I say, are fundamental truths which God recognizes in his plans to give men joy. God desired that man should enjoy life. But to enjoy, he must appreciate; and to appreciate, he must pay the price. Another necessary feature to appreciation is to taste the opposite. So, in order that man might appreciate the sweet, it was necessary for him to taste the bitter; and that he might appreciate eternal life, he must taste one that was not eternal. Yet, for all these laws, there was still one other, and that was the law of choice. God did not intend even to force upon man a life under these conditions, but recognized that true appreciation could only come through freedom and choice. So we were given the privilege of choosing whether or not we would come into a material world, take upon us a material body, and gain joy by paying the price. The occasion of this choice was the crucial point in the relationship between man and law, and man and God. So crucial, indeed, that one-third of the host of heaven rebelled against God. This choice was presented in the spirit world. So man (Adam) was created in the flesh, and placed here under a condition of freedom, and, although he had

once voiced his willingness to become subject to the great plan, was yet free to choose an eternal life devoid of the contrast of good and evil, or a life subject to temptation and trial, with reward crowning victory. It was necessary that the children of men should taste adversity, that they might enjoy happiness; and that adversity might be brought into the world justly, God made it the punishment for sin, on the part of our first parent. Adam and Eve being given the intelligence to know their own desire, being tempted, accepted the one which they had been warned against, and entailed upon themselves and their posterity the result of the law. So, God, in his infinite love, had brought about the condition by which man, by his own choice, embraced a future from which he could wrest achievements and enjoy them. Need I explain further that for man to enjoy and appreciate, he must win by his own achievements? Or will any one question the love of God in this matter? Let us see. Loving and wise parents will not do for their children what they, the children, should do for themselves, because they know that such a course would be injurious to their children's welfare. Loving parents desire to see their children learn to do by doing, to triumph over obstacles, and enjoy their victory.

Now we find man on earth subject to the laws of nature and to mortality. But now we have only come to the condition from which Christ's atonement would redeem us. Then, the question, why did not God establish some other plan? I have already shown that the condition of mortality, to which we acquiesced in the spirit, was made the punishment for sin on the part of our first (earthly) parents. Directly, it was made the result of a broken law; indirectly, it was something vital to the attainment of joy. But though it be a part of a plan, still it is the demand of justice for a broken law, and if man be brought from the place where an inviolable law had brought him, a ransom had to be given that law be not broken. If someone would pay the ransom, God could bring men back to life and immortality without leaving a broken law unsatisfied.

And here again we find the principle of choice. This plan of redemption was part of the occasion spoken of before, where the spirits of men were given their agency to choose or reject the plan

of truth. On this occasion, God made the proposition and asked, who will pay the ransom and redeem mankind? Lucifer, then the Son of the Morning, in answer, made a proposition. But in his plan he was going to break a law, by taking away man's free agency. But Christ, our Elder Brother, proffered to come and save whomsoever would be saved, and give his Father the glory. He would redeem all men from the grave, and establish a plan whereby they would choose for themselves their reward and condition. His plan was accepted. But what would be the ransom? An unsatisfied law is as bad as none. If he were going to pay the ransom and redeem man, he must necessarily pay that which would satisfy the law. What would satisfy the law? The debt being death, what could be given in exchange for it? Nothing—it must be paid in its kind. Who could pay it for the human race? Not sinful man, because each owed the debt for himself. But it must be paid by one begotten by other than sinful and mortal man. So Jesus Christ was given a tabernacle, begotten of God, and he freely gave it in ransom for man. The law is now satisfied; and with a more glorious result. The condition of death which mortality demanded has been dispelled by Innocence atoning for Sin.

And this is not all: Christ has proved to men his love in a way which could not be greater. As a leader and a pattern, he showed to mankind that self-sacrifice is one of the most glorious principles. And more than that, he, being like his Father, not able to break law and reap its blessings, complied with the law that appreciation comes by paying the price. Certainly, if he were going to be a pattern to mankind, and if he were going to occupy a position of being worshiped, he must attain it by paying the price. And so it was, "though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; and being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation." He purchased the most exalted position occupied by any of God's children, by paying the greatest price. Not that others have not given their lives for their fellowman, but that he, the only person of accountability, without sin, gave his life for sinners. Thus we have a lesson taught that ought to impress us of our close relationship to God. One that proves to us that God has not one set of laws for

himself and another for his children, but that his law is truth, and truth is eternal. Christ himself, though he were a God, recognized the truth that has since been expressed in words something like this:

Heaven is not reached in a single bound,
But we build the ladder by which we rise
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,
And mount it round by round.

What is heaven? Heaven is a condition of joy and satisfaction derived from the correspondence that we are able to appreciate. We appreciate by an inward power attained by doing; and, as was stated in the beginning, we learn to do by doing. So the heaven of Jesus Christ, though he be a God, is a condition of appreciated power, gained by doing. Therefore, he descended below all things that he might rise above all things. His joy is accelerated by the knowledge that he conquered death; that he was tempted, and overcame temptation; that he had not asked men to do more than he showed them he would do; in sum: that he overcame all.

So, making reference again to this lesson, we see that God does not disregard law, because he is God; but he observes law, because he is God. If this, then, is one of the things that constitute him a God, and if we wish to attain a condition like him, (or, using the words of Jesus, become "perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect,") it is expedient that we conform to the law in a way that he has pointed out. When we come to see things clearly, and not "through a glass darkly," we will discover that we are punished by our sins rather than for them. And the same is true of our meritorious acts; we are rewarded by them. Each act does not bring upon the actor a reward or punishment from without, but has within it a reward. And when the mist, which for a time obscures the light of truth, has rolled away, and we behold the brightness, we shall say, in the words of Paul, that God's plan is a "perfect law of liberty," and in our ecstasy, as we behold the union of justice and mercy, we shall exclaim, "All is love, yet all is law."

New York City, N.Y.

THE QUARREL.*

(*For the Improvement Era*).

About some small trifles, that didn't quite suit,
Two garter snakes once had an angry dispute.

They wrestled and wriggled and parried and coiled,
And mockingly hissed as each other they foiled,

Till one, by some chance, grabbed the other's long tail,
Who in similar way did his rival assail.

And now you must see, for its probably true,
That they both would hold fast, for what else could they do?

And although astonished, they couldn't say so,
But lay there, a ring, like a great big round O.

Then each swallowed down quite a bit of its neighbor,
Though plainly, it wasn't a right *tasteful* labor.

And as each tail slipped in 'neath a rival's low crown,
Why the heads they went up, and the tails they went down.

Now this is both logic and equity too,
So clearly can one such a problem see through,

They kept on a swallowing, slowly and sure,
For in like jurisprudence there can be no cure,

And a growing still less as the minutes flew past,—
'Tis a logical sequence what happened at last,—

For bye-and-bye, surely such facts never fail,
They swallowed each other, head, body and tail!

And thus these two reptiles, 'tis sad to relate,
Left nothing to show their astonishing fate.

MORAL.

In fighting your neighbor o'er questions of pelf,
Beware! or you may be destroying yourself.

J. L. TOWNSEND.

Payson, Utah.

* While studying natural history, the writer read of one who saw two snakes in the act of swallowing each other. Upon returning to the place, some hours after, no trace of the reptiles could be found. This peculiar circumstance suggested this verse and moral.

LIFE OF ST. PAUL FOR THE YOUNG.

BY GEORGE LUDINGTON WEED.

CHAPTER V.

THE YOUNG PHARISEE AND RABBI.

The Temple School—The Boys Jesus and Saul—Other Boys—Saul the Young Pharisee—God's Laws and Jewish Traditions—Rab, Rabbi, Rabban—The Most Promising Young Man—Great Changes to Come—Onkelos.

There was a school of the Rabbis in the Temple in Jerusalem where any who chose could go and learn about the Old Testament Scriptures and the Jewish religion. We suppose that Gamaliel was one of the teachers, and that his favorite pupil would follow him thither and attend to all the questions that were asked, and all the wise replies. Perhaps he would sometimes ask questions himself, so wise that the doctors of the law would admire him, and make Gamaliel proud of his young pupil.

It is possible that Saul was present on a certain day when there came into that school another boy about his own age, who astonished the Rabbis even more than Saul had done. It was that boy's first and only visit unless he had been there the day before. He came alone. Modestly, reverently, solemnly, attentively, earnestly, silently he sat. For a little while he was "hearing them," listening to the only kind of teaching they gave; but he was not satisfied: he had other and deeper thoughts. At last he broke his silence and began "asking them questions." We wish we knew what was the first and the rest. They replied, and he made answer, and "all that heard him were astonished at his

understanding." Saul had heard no such discussion in the Temple school or in that of Gamaliel. Perhaps it was about the Messiah of whom they were studying, and for whose coming he was looking. He little thought the expected One had come, and that he beheld him at the very time when Jesus was probably discovering himself to be the Messiah.

It is possible that then and there the eyes of Jesus and of Saul met, and that the young pupil of Gamaliel listened with tender interest to the voice which one day he would hear calling his own name from the skies. Between those two events how many and what great things were to happen to them both.

At the time of that meeting in the Temple school, there were other boys in Palestine of about the same age as Saul, of whom he did not know. John, afterward the Baptist, was in Hebron; Peter and Andrew, James and John were fishermen on the Sea of Galilee. Saul was to know them as apostles of Jesus who would call him to be greater than any one of them.

During all this time Saul, the young Pharisee in Jerusalem, was careful of his outward conduct, and tried hard to obey the traditions which men had added to the laws of God. In so doing, we may think of him as being very careful of the exact size of the piece of parchment he wore, and of the number of the lines of text upon it, and of the form of the letters, and of the shape of the box that held the text, and just how it should be fastened on his forehead or his arm where men could see it and think him very holy. We call this foolish, and know God did not require such things of him, but he had been trained differently from us, and thought it was right and pleasing to God and would make him happy. Long after his school days were ended, he said, not boastingly, "I advanced in the Jewish religion beyond many of my own age in my race, being more exceedingly zealous for the traditions of my fathers."

God's laws are like the good fruit on a tree; traditions are like false fruit made by man to look like the real, and hung upon the branches. The one can satisfy hunger: the other cannot. Obedience to God's law can give happiness; obedience to traditions cannot. Paul tried hard to study and obey the laws his fathers had made; but this did not give him the happiness he sought. We

shall see how he learned and taught "a more excellent way."

He had already received the title of Rab, the first given to a student of Jewish law, and now receives the higher one of Rabbi with his diploma from the University of Jerusalem which would make him welcome to any synagogue in any land. He has fulfilled the highest hopes of his father in sending him to Jerusalem. He may rise to the highest place in the nation. He is fitted to be a scribe or lawyer explaining the Jewish Law and traditions, and pleading in the Jewish courts. May he not, like Gamaliel, to be called Rabban, and so there be eight instead of seven to receive the highest title given only to the most learned men? Perhaps he would have received it, had he not sought the honor which cometh from God only.

His university life is ended. He is proud of his success. He thinks of himself as wiser and better than his companions. Full of ambition and ardor, he is determined to do great things for his nation and their religion. Men call him learned and good. He is looked upon as a perfect example. Active, bold, eloquent, he is probably the most promising young man in Jerusalem or among all his people. They may well ask, "Will he not become the pride of our nation, and help to deliver us from the Roman power?"

But their thoughts and his concerning him are to be greatly changed. He is now boasting of things of which he will be ashamed. Truth which he now rejects, he will some day preach as the word of God. There is a people whom he now despises and persecutes, but who will become his choicest friends and for whom he will willingly suffer. There is One whom he now ardently hates, but whom he will love supremely and serve faithfully, and for whom he will willingly die. But that future is hidden from him and all who know him: he is "a chosen vessel"—one through whom God will do great things, but not of the kind which now fills the heart and mind of Saul.

As Saul leaves the university, it is with grateful memories of Gamaliel, whom he honored even when he had rejected the false teachings of his master; for the pupil became more truly wise than the wisest Rabbi. When the great teacher died, one of his pupils, Onkelos by name, in love and gratitude built a splendid and costly monument to his memory, such as nations build for their kings.

For this deed and his writings, he is remembered. But Saul is remembered because of nobler deeds for which he was fitting himself, though he knew it not, while he "sat at the feet of Gamaliel."

We do not know in what year Saul finished his education in Jerusalem, begun when he was probably thirteen years of age. He had become a young Rabbi. It is supposed that he returned to his early home in Tarsus.

CHAPTER VI.

CHRIST AND EARLY CHRISTIANITY.

John the Baptist—Jesus the Teacher—Jesus the Miracle-worker—Jesus Rejected and Crucified—The Resurrection and the Great Command—Farewell in Jerusalem—Ascension—Meaning of the Word Gospel—Followers of Jesus in Jerusalem—A Strange People—Day of Pentecost.

The years when Saul was absent from Jerusalem were the most wonderful in the history of the world. On the banks of the Jordan, John the Baptist proclaimed to a multitude that the Messiah had come. Jesus suddenly appeared before him to be baptized. He gathered about him a company of apostles trained for his service, and to whom he would entrust the establishment of his Church on the earth. He was the Great Teacher. No man ever spake as he did. He declared only the truth of God. In the Temple in Jerusalem, on the seashore, and on the mountains of Galilee, gracious words proceeded out of his mouth—words of invitation and comfort; also words of warning and woe to those who repented not, but continued in sin. He perfectly obeyed the law of God, rejecting the traditions of men. He was the only perfect example for men to follow.

He showed his divine power by the miracles he wrought, both on things and men, commanding the winds and waves, walking on the sea, healing sicknesses, giving sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf, and strength to the palsied, and even restoring the dead to life.

Many believed his words and in him as their Savior, and were united to him in closest friendship. Many more believed him not, but rejected his teachings and salvation through him. Bitter enemies reviled him, saying all manner of evil against him, and

sought his life. Among them were Priests⁷ and Rabbis and the most powerful men of the nation. Though innocent, he was charged with great crimes, arrested, unjustly tried, and condemned to a shameful death on the cross.

When Jesus was crucified, his life on earth seemed to be a failure. His friends, even his disciples, were disappointed and sad: his enemies rejoiced. But on the third day, he rose again. On a mountain in Galilee where he had told them to meet him, their hopes revived. "When they saw him, they worshiped him" as the God and Savior they thought him to be before his death. Five hundred true friends were gathered there. They had seen the power of his enemies in Jerusalem, and also how powerless had become the attempts to destroy him and his work by putting him to death. He said to them, "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth." And because of his power, he gave them this command, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you;" and then he added this promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world."

But this was not the farewell meeting of Jesus with his apostles and friends. That was in Jerusalem where he told them to stay until the Holy Spirit should come into their hearts. There he said, "Ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." "And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands and blessed them. And it came to pass that while he blessed them, he was parted from them and carried up into heaven. And a cloud received him out of their sight."

By the Gospel we mean the good news of salvation through Christ. As he commanded, it was first preached in Jerusalem. For a time, the only church was there, numbering at first only one hundred and twenty persons, but very soon increasing to five thousand. They had no church building, but went from house to house for prayer and study of the Scriptures, and communing together about their once dead but risen Lord. Their affection for him was so great that they loved one another and were called Brethren. The name Christian was not yet given to them. They

still attended the Temple worship and the Jewish festivals. In many things which were right they did as other Jews. They were careful in their conduct, trying to do as Christ would have them do, so that none could justly speak against their new religion. Their love for Christ made them different from the people about them, making their lives more lovely, their friendships closer, and their happiness more complete.

But they were considered a strange kind of people, believing things which others did not, and explaining the Scriptures differently from what the Rabbis did. Strangest of all, they believed that Jesus, who had been shamefully crucified as "a malefactor," was the Messiah for whom the Jews had been looking, and that he had risen from the dead.

Fifty days after the crucifixion of Christ, and ten days after his ascension, there was the first great gathering of Jews into the Christian Church. Many had come from different countries to attend the Feast of Pentecost in Jerusalem. There were pilgrims from the Tigris and the Euphrates, in the far East, the Nile in Egypt, the Tiber in Italy, from provinces of Asia Minor, the deserts of Arabia, and the islands of Greece.

"They were all with one accord in one place." The Holy Spirit, promised by Christ, for whom they had been waiting, came "and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost." Peter preached a wonderful sermon proving that "Jesus of Nazareth was Christ the Lord." Three thousand people believed his words, repented of their sins, and were baptized.

CHAPTER VII.

ST. STEPHEN, THE FIRST CHRISTIAN MARTYR.

Church Deacons—Stephen—Synagogue of Cilicia—Three Great Questions—Saul in the Synagogue—Stephen in the Sanhedrin—"The Face of an Angel"—A Heavenly Vision—Stephen Dragged Out of the City—Memories of Olivet—Stephen Stoned—Saul the Guardian of Robes—Two Short Prayers—"A Friend and Witness Near"—Answered Prayer—A Lasting Impression—A Terrible Name.

The early Christians cared for those of their number in need. The richer gave to the poor. Seven deacons were appointed to take charge of the money, and especially to look after a fund for

widows. The chief deacon was named Stephen. It is said that he was very beautiful. Better than that, he had learning and eloquence. Best of all, he was a devout man, "full of faith and the Holy Ghost." Because he had these, by God's help, he "did great wonders and miracles among the people." Day after day he went from synagogue to synagogue, preaching about Jesus the Messiah, the crucified but risen Savior. He claimed that we must be saved by repentance, and faith in him; and not in the way by which we have seen Saul and the other Pharisees trying to be saved.

One of the places where Stephen used to speak was the "synagogue of them of Cilicia," where people from that country were accustomed to worship. We are told that "there arose certain of the synagogue disputing with Stephen." The chief questions about which they disputed were three—Was Jesus the Messiah? Why did he die? Did he rise from the dead? As Saul was from Tarsus, he would worship with his countrymen in the synagogue of Cilicia; and, as he was probably the most learned of the Rabbis in it, he would be again and again the chief disputer with Stephen. But "they were not able to resist the wisdom and spirit by which he spoke." His holy zeal for Christ only increased the madness against him. They determined that his voice should no longer be heard in that synagogue or any other; it should be silenced in death.

He was dragged before the Sanhedrin, the highest Jewish court. False witnesses said, "We have heard him speak blasphemous words against Moses and against God." Such witnesses had said such things against Jesus when he was unjustly tried before Pilate.

Stephen calmly looked into the enraged faces of his enemies. His appearance was a great contrast to theirs. "All that sat in the council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel." He made a charge against them, not in anger but in faithfulness, awful because true—that they had been the betrayers and murderers of their Messiah. This enraged them yet more. "When they heard these things they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth," like wild beasts rather than men.

But the holy man turned his eyes away from them. "Being

full of the Holy Ghost, he looked up into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing on the right hand of God." Continuing his gaze, seemingly unconscious of the strange and far different scene about him, not heeding the voices of malice and rage, he exclaimed with ecstasy of delight, "Behold, I see the heavens open and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God." One of the early fathers notes that word "standing" as if the Son of Man, crucified, then glorified, "rose from his glorious throne, to welcome his first apostle and martyr."

After an absence of several years from Jerusalem, Saul returned soon after the death of Jesus. We may think of him as present in the Sanhedrin even if not yet a member, and so not qualified to give his vote against Stephen. But while "they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, and cast him out of the city," "Saul was consenting unto his death."

It was a mixed multitude that went with Stephen, as he was led from the Council Hall, adjoining the Holy House, to the spot made sacred by their unholy deed. There were Priests and Scribes, exciting by words and actions the passions of the rabble ready to do their bidding. Following them were Christian disciples, faithful to their leader as were the women who followed Jesus to his cross. Passing through the eastern gate of Jerusalem, to this day called St. Stephen's in precious memory of him, they entered the valley of Jehoshaphat. Did not Stephen glance across to the slope of Olivet, to the garden of Gethsemane, and in remembrance of the agonies of his Lord say, "Thy will be done?" Of Jesus it is said, in that hour of his agony, "there appeared an angel strengthening him." Did not Stephen also receive strength from him who is greater than angel or archangel, for whom he had been a faithful witness, and who had an hour before appeared to him in a vision of glory?

"They stoned Stephen." Such is the brief and simple record, leaving our imagination to supply the horrible details. Those who performed the awful deed were determined to do thorough and earnest work. For it they laid aside their loose upper garments, that their arms might be free in casting the fatal stones. They had been false witnesses in the Sanhedrin, and were now adding

murder to their lying testimony given to secure Stephen's death.

"The witnesses laid down their clothes at a young man's feet whose name was Saul." Could they not trust the rabble that followed them? Were they afraid of theft while engaged in murder? Were there many colored robes of more value than the blood-stained form at which they cast stone after stone?

Yet there was one whom they could trust as guardian of their robes. This is our first distinct view of Saul. In following him thus far, we have had to depend on what we know of the times when, and the places where, he lived, and on what was said of him in after years. As he stood by the pile of garments watching them, and much more the martyr a little distance from him, we wonder what were his thoughts and feelings. Had he no pity? If so, there was a deeper sense of satisfaction in what he and the others were doing to destroy, as he hoped, the religion of the despised Nazarene.

Stephen uttered two short prayers. The first was for himself. It is possible that he had heard the dying words of Christ—"Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." And now with like trust he cries, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Stephen remembered the agonies of the cross as he felt the tortures of the stones. He remembered the voice of prayer that rose above the sound of the crucifiers' hammer, "Father forgive them." Above the rabble shout, in the same spirit of Christ, rose Stephen's prayer for his murderers, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge."

"With such a Friend and Witness near,
No form of death could make him fear;
Calm amid showers of stones he kneels,
And only for his murderers feels."

With this forgiving prayer, "he fell asleep." For one, at least, of his enemies that prayer was answered, but not as soon as the dying thief had the blessed assurance of living with Christ, for Saul was not yet ready to cry to him, "Lord, remember me."

Saul never could forget that scene, the looks, words, spirit, vision, peace, calmness, love, prayer, forgiveness, of him in whose death he had a share. Years after, in the temple, almost on the spot where Stephen had a vision of Jesus, he also had a vision in which with shame and sorrow he confessed, "When the blood of

thy martyr Stephen was shed, I also was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him."

When John the Baptist was beheaded, "his disciples came and took up the body and buried it, and went and told Jesus." To whom else could *his* disciples go when "devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him"? Though comforted by that name, another was full of terror in every Christian home in Jerusalem. It was that of Saul, the persecutor.

CHAPTER VIII.

SAUL THE PERSECUTOR.

Persecution—Saul a Leader—Mistaken Zeal—Cruelty—Christians Scattered Abroad—High Priest's Letter—Saul Starts for Damascus—Gibea—Bethel—Shiloh—Samaria—Sychar—Tomb of Joseph—Sea of Galilee—Busy Thoughts—Possible doubts.

For a while after the Pentecost, the followers of Christ were allowed to worship him and preach the gospel without harm. But as their numbers increased, opposition grew. The Sadducees had the greatest influence in the Jewish nation. The high priest was one of them. They denied and hated the doctrine of the resurrection which the Christians believed and taught, and so hated them. The death of Stephen was followed by a most violent persecution.

Saul's zeal in the martyrdom of Stephen made him a hero in the minds of the Pharisees and Sadducees. They were ready to give him more honor than he had yet received, even the greatest they could bestow. He was made a member of the Sanhedrin, probably as a scribe. He gave his vote against Christians falsely charged with wrongdoing. A great work was given him to do in trying to destroy the Christian Church. He was ready to do it. Strange as it seems to us, and as it did to him afterward, he had an honest but mistaken feeling that this was pleasing to God. He declared, "I verily thought with myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." Believing that Jesus was not the Messiah, he thought that faith in him and belief in his resurrection, were displeasing to God. He thought that in opposing the teachings of Christians and in persecuting them, he could

make up what was lacking in his obedience to the law of God and Jewish traditions, and so gain the happiness he had vainly sought all his life.

After the death of Stephen, Saul was more zealous than before in the persecution of Christians in Jerusalem. He went from house to house, full of rage and cruelty, carrying sorrow into once happy homes. He tried to make the friends of Jesus revile his name, and deny that they were his friends. They refused to obey him. He dragged them from their homes in chains, separating parents from their children. He whipped and scourged them, tortured them in many ways, persecuting them even unto death. He had no pity on the old or the infirm; he was exceedingly cruel even to feeble and helpless women. Perhaps some of them were the faithful, loving "daughters of Jerusalem" who had followed Jesus when bearing his cross, to whom he said, thinking of this coming time, "Weep not for me; but weep for yourselves and your children."

No enemy was so feared by Christians as this young Rabbi. Distant towns and cities heard of his awful deeds. In Damascus it became known "how much evil he had done to the saints of God at Jerusalem."

We remember—what he did not know—that the time was to come when he also would endure stoning, scourging, imprisonment, and even death, for being one of "the saints of God."

Just before Christ's ascension, he told his disciples that they should be his witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria. This became true after the death of Stephen, but in a way they did not suspect. It is written in the Acts: "At that time there was a great persecution against the church which was in Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria except the apostles." "They that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word."

This work of the Christians was very displeasing to Saul. "Being exceedingly mad against them, he persecuted them even to strange cities." One of these was Damascus, the capital of Syria, to which Christians had fled and where they were persuading men to become the followers of Jesus.

A few months after Stephen's death, Saul, not satisfied with

the persecution of Jerusalem Christians, asked of Theophilus, the powerful high priest, letters to the synagogues in Damascus, giving him power, if he found any Christians there, to seize, bind and bring them to Jerusalem. He had no right to ask such permit, nor had the high priest any right to grant it, but he did.

Damascus, which claims to be the oldest city in the world, was the capital of Syria, about one hundred and fifty miles north of Jerusalem. The journey between the two cities required six or eight days, over mountains, plains and deserts. Unlike the humble band of Jesus and his disciples traveling on foot, Saul went in great pomp. His attendants treated their Rabbi with great respect. They were of like spirit with himself, and were ready to obey his most cruel bidding.

Let us follow him and the way he probably journeyed. His road first wound through a mountainous region. At "Gibea of Saul" he would recall the king whose name he bore. He passed through a rocky country on whose terraces were fields of grain and gardens of melons and cucumbers with which the cavalcade could refresh themselves. He passed through many scenes of sacred story, but his thoughts were on the future, not the past. At Bethel, he possibly spent the night where Jacob did seventeen hundred years before. What dreams should have haunted him there. He had no bright vision of angels: he heard no voice of God saying, "I am with thee to keep thee whither thou goest." At Shiloh, he would be reminded of the priestly boy Samuel, ready to obey the call of the Lord.

Crossing the hills of Samaria, he caught glimpses of the Mediterranean sea, over which he had sailed from his early home, and which in later life would bear him to its bordering countries to establish the religion he was now trying to destroy.

Entering the beautiful vale of Sychar, between the twin mountains of Ebal and Gerizim, he would refresh himself at the well at which his father Jacob drank. What words had been spoken there. "I know that Messiah cometh," said the woman of Samaria. "I am he," said the weary, thirsty stranger. Had Saul met her at the well as was possible, and believed her testimony, he would have returned to Jerusalem without completing his errand.

As he gazed at the neighboring tomb of Joseph, did he receive

an impression which was yet fresh when he wrote to the Hebrews, "By faith Joseph gave commandment concerning his bones"—that they should be buried here. Entering Galilee, he would gain his first view of Mount Hermon, the tower of "Lebanon that looketh toward Damascus." From a lofty range, he could look down upon the Sea of Galilee; but, while admiring its beauties, he had no precious memories of him who made it the most sacred of waters. Nor cared he then for a sight of the mountain where Christ commanded, "Go ye and teach all nations"—the command which Saul was yet most faithfully to obey.

Crossing the Jordan, then the barren uplands, there stretched before him a vast plain, dry and sterile in the burning sun.

As Saul journeyed day after day, in the cool, early dawn or in the brilliant starlight of the clear eastern sky, he had abundant leisure for reflection. His thoughts must have been busy concerning himself and the despised Nazarenes whom he persecuted, and the Messiah in whom they believed. He must have thought that they had a kind of peace which he had not, though he had sought it through many years. Was he quite sure that in going to Damascus he was on God's errand? "That face of Stephen that he had seen bathed as with the light from heaven, until it had been dimmed in blood, must have haunted him, as we know it did for long years afterward." Could he forget Stephen's prayer for murderers? Did he not begin to feel, if he had never felt before, that in fighting against Christians possibly he was fighting against God? Was he quite sure after all that Jesus was not the Messiah? Did not his very doubts increase his madness? Was he not vainly striving to check the promptings of his conscience? We shall find occasion for so believing.

CHAPTER IX.

THE VISION OF JESUS—THE CHANGED LIFE.

Contrasted Scenes—Leader of a Cavalcade—An Earthly Paradise—An Arab Prince—A Great Light—"Jesus of Nazareth"—The Great Change—Saul's Blindness—Damascus—Three Silent Days—Saul's Vision of Peace—Ananias' Vision—"Brother Saul."

The tedious journey is nearly ended. The weary company will soon exchange the treeless, bleak and blaring desert for the

shady avenues of palm, orange and citron groves; the barren sands for gardens where grow flowers of endless varieties, and the damask rose yields its sweetest perfume; where the fainting travelers can feast themselves in the groves on luscious fruit, and cool their heated brows in natural and artificial streams; and where the lively song of birds takes the place of the deathlike silence of the desert.

But all this does not calm the raging spirit of the cavalcade.

“The leader of that martial crew,
Seems bent on some mighty deed to do,
So steadily he speeds;
With lips firm closed and fixed eye,
Like warrior when the fight is nigh,
So steadily he speeds.”

At last they reach the place of the modern village of Kaukab, meaning brightness, so called in remembrance of a brighter light that nineteen hundred years ago gleamed above and around it. Here burst upon them that beautiful view which more than any other has been called throughout the ages a “Paradise of God.” The Abana and the Pharpar known in Scripture as “streams from Lebanon” and the “rivers of Damascus,” which Naaman called “better than all the waters of Israel,” made the wilderness blossom as the rose.

The green foliage of olive, walnut, pomegranate and palm, is a magnificent setting for the roofs that rise in terraces among them, and the cupolas that glitter over all. “A handful of pearls in its goblet of emeralds,” fittingly describes the city which Saul with his company is approaching.

It is said of an Arab prince that on first beholding it he would go no further, and on the spot erected a monument with this inscription: “I expect to enter one Paradise, but if I enter this city I should be so ravished with its beauties as to lose sight of the Paradise which I hope to enter.”

“The midday sun, with fiercest glare,
Broods o’er the hazy, twinkling air,
Along the level sand.
The palm trees’ shade unwavering lies,
Just as thy towers, Damascus, rise
To greet yon wearied band.”

Unlike other travelers, who seek khan or tent for shelter from the Syrian sun at high noon, Saul with impatient haste passed on, caring not for the fierce and quivering air and the glare from the earth. Suddenly "there lightened a great light." The whole atmosphere was ablaze. The whole company fell to the ground in terror or stood in amazement and fear; the scene was one of confusion and alarm. When the others were partially recovered, Saul, for whom it was all intended, lay still prostrate on the earth.

Saul had a vision hidden from his companions. There was a voice meaningless to them, saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" It was like that of a man, whom he respectfully addressed as "Lord," or "Sir," asking, "Who art thou?" It was the Lord in a different sense who answered, "I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest." Saul had often heard and spoken that name with contempt. Why did Jesus use it now? Why did he not say, as St. Chrysostom asks, "I am the Son of God; the Word that was from the beginning; he that sitteth on the right hand of the Father; he who is in the form of God; he who stretched out the heavens; he who made the earth; he who leveled the sea; he who created the angels; he who is everywhere and filleth all things?"

Had Jesus said these things of himself, Saul would not have thought of him as the one whom he was persecuting; but when he called himself Jesus of Nazareth, Saul understood who and what he was. It is as if he had said: "I am the expected Messiah. I came to earth, lived, died and rose again, and ascended to heaven. So truly believe the Christians whom you persecute. In so doing, you persecute me. With your troubled conscience you are finding this hard to do. From this hour do thyself no harm by opposing me and mine." As Peter's heart melted under the earthly glance of the Lord, so did Saul's under the heavenly. The Lord said to him, "Arise and go into Damascus." That was just what he had intended to do. His commission to destroy Christians was yet in his rabbinic robe. But his commission was changed to what he did not know.

He had fallen from his horse a proud Pharisee; he rose a humble Christian. The strong man had become as a little child.

The chief persecutor of the Nazarenes was to become their boldest defender. He had seen the Lord Jesus as truly as any of the apostles, and was fitted to become his chief apostle. The line that divided his journey to Damascus was the dividing line of his life. That moment on the ground was one to which he never looked forward as possible; but it was the one to which he ever looked backward with gratitude and praise.

The brilliancy of Saul's vision had made him blind. This his companions discovered as soon as he rose. They led the riderless horse which he could no longer guide. He who planned to lead men and women bound to Jerusalem was now led blind to Damascus. Those whom Saul would have made his victims were probably the best prepared of any in the Paradise below to hear their Lord say, "Today shalt thou be with me in the Paradise above." But that day had not yet come, for the crucified Lord had arrested the executioner's arm that would have hastened them thither.

Damascus is a walled city. One of its gates is called St. Paul, in memory of his entering it; as that of St. Stephen, out of which Saul passed with him, helps to keep the first martyr in everlasting remembrance. From St. Paul's gate, extending through the city, a mile in length, was and still is a street called "Straight." In it was the house of a man named Judas, which may be the same as that pointed out to the traveler today.

There Saul for three memorable days sits in silence, in darkness, alone, helpless and friendless. He has even more leisure for meditation than on his journey. He reviews his life. He sees what great mistakes he has made and what great wrongs he has done. He once thought of his own goodness; he now thinks of God's love. Jesus has given him the peace which he once thought he could purchase by being a strict Pharisee. He thinks of his future. What shall it be? It is as completely hidden from him as is the world to his sightless eyes. For these three days and nights his bodily sufferings are so great, his thoughts so busy, and his feelings so deep that he can neither eat nor drink. Oh for companionship and help! To whom shall he look? To the same Jesus of Nazareth that appeared to him in the way. As a Pharisee, he has long used the words and forms of prayer, but now he has the spirit of the Publican. His prayer is answered, and before

the three days are ended he knows the great plan of his life's work, and something of what he is to be, to do, and to suffer. God gives him a peaceful vision in which he sees one of those whom he had come to destroy, coming to him with comfort and help. "Not Peter, or James, or John, no great and eminent apostle, need be sent for, to instruct the learned and highly-talented Saul; but Ananias, some poor, simple-hearted Christian, of whom the Divine Word has never before made mention, is fully sufficient, in God's hand, to teach this most richly endowed of all the early converts."

To Ananias the Lord also appeared in vision, bidding him go to Saul of Tarsus, adding as reason, "Behold he prayeth." Even this assurance hardly overcame the fears of Ananias, who knew the evil Saul had done in Jerusalem, and for what purpose he had come to Damascus. "But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way, for he is a chosen vessel unto me." "And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house, and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord even Jesus has sent me." This was the first Christian greeting to him who was to give and send so many such to others. Ananias laid his hands on him, bidding him rise with returning sight, be baptized and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And so Saul the persecutor was received into the Church of Christ; to whom we hear him saying in amazement and joy:

"And can I be the very same
Who lately durst blaspheme thy name,
And on thy gospel tread?
Surely each one who hears my case,
Will praise thee, and confess thy grace,
Invincible indeed!"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

THE DOOR TO FORGIVENESS.

BY JAMES X. ALLEN, M. D.

Today, a brother was telling me about a young man who has ceased praying. He has fallen into sin so often that he has become disheartened, and has despaired of forgiveness for his many backslidings. Therefore, he has ceased to pray, and given himself up as lost.

For ought I know, there may be others who may read the *ERA* who have degenerated in the same way. If there be such, I want to say to them, don't give up; don't despair. God knows your weakness, and he will never give you up so long as you trust him, and perseveringly seek after him. Above all things, do not cease to pray. The lower you have fallen, the more need is there for prayer. Persistent, earnest, unceasing prayer. Never forget that God forgives sin!

The disciples asked our Lord, how many times shall we forgive those who do wrong? and suggested seven times. But note the answer of that great Teacher: "Until seventy times seven." Would you for a moment suppose that the Lord would ask you or me to be more generous than he himself is toward those for whom he underwent so much suffering?

Trust him, my young brother, trust him, and pray always; pray without ceasing, and God will not only forgive you, he will do more, he will help you and strengthen you, insomuch that you will be able to rise above your weakness, and not only do right, but you will love the right, and will hate sin as you will pity the sinner, and sympathize with the sinner in his struggle to overcome his failing.

A soul is never lost as long as it can pray, and repentance is possible.

We have a marked example of God's condescension and mercy in the life of the Psalmist David. What could be worse than the great fall of King David? God had done so much for him. He had raised him from obscurity to a throne. He had placed him head and shoulders above all his fellows. He was a general favorite with God, and there was nothing that his heart could desire that God would withhold from him. And yet, he presumed upon his position to sin most grievously. While other sinners went from bad to worse—as most sinners do—David, from the time that the prophet chastised him, and said "Thou art the man," David turned from his sins and sought God in prayer and sacrifice; then, as proof of his sincerity, when Hannah offered to furnish the means of sacrificing, David's answer is very significant: "I will not offer burnt offerings unto the Lord my God of that which cost me nothing."

The life of the Psalmist David is one of great comfort to sinners who repent and turn to God with sincere repentance. From being the greatest of sinners, he became the first of Saints, "A man after God's own heart."

I am speaking to the young men in Israel—young men trained under the best of teachings, and as constantly witnessing the best and most virtuous lives in their parents and leaders; and because of these teachings and holy examples, they become special objects for the cunningly laid plans of the evil one.

We read that Satan labored incessantly forty days to bring our Savior under his power. Satan failed, Christ triumphed, and became the Savior of the world. The better and more noble the spirit, the more persistent is the evil one in his endeavor to bring about a fall from grace. And if he can get the conviction engrafted into the heart of a son or daughter of God, that he or she has sinned beyond redemption, so that they will cease to pray, cease to strive after the higher life, he has them just about where he wants them.

Young man, never give up. Never lose faith in God's mercy, in God's love, and power, pray always. Without prayer there is no repentance, and without repentance there is no forgiveness of

sins. Where prayer and repentance have a good foothold, with proper guidance, the Holy of Holies is sure to be reached.

The Savior told his disciples that they should forgive "seventy times seven." Surely, he will not be less merciful to us, than he wishes us to be to each other. We have an example of discouragement in Judas Iscariot. He sold the Master for thirty pieces of silver. Perhaps Judas did not expect that the Master would allow himself to be taken prisoner. The Lord, on several occasions, when encompassed by those who sought his life, took himself from their midst without let or hindrance. Judas had seen this, he had witnessed the miraculous healing of many souls, had seen the life-long blind given eyesight, had seen cripples made whole, and the dead restored to life; how could it ever enter into his heart that one having such miraculous power would calmly submit himself to the indignities of a public arrest and trial by men from whom he could have easily escaped, or could have stricken palsied as easily as he cursed the barren fig tree. The greatest evil, it appears to me, that Judas could have premeditated was that of obtaining money by a low trickery, from the enemies of his Master, and their associates.

But to the astonishment and horror of the apostle, the Master meekly submitted to arrest, and calmly bore all the indignities that were heaped upon him. No sooner did Judas sense the situation, than horror seized his soul, and he hastened to the ones who had tempted him and demanded that they take back the money, saying, "I have betrayed innocent blood." When they refused the money, he flung it at them, and went and took his own life.

What depths of anguish and despair must have filled the soul of this misguided apostle! He, it seems, never thought of prayer—of repentance. His conviction was that he had sinned beyond repentance. Young man, pray always that God may give you strength and fortitude to overcome the evils which beset the path of youth. But, should you ever fail, never, no never, doubt God's mercy. Pray the oftener and the more earnestly, and God will help you to recover your lost place in his Church and in his affections.

How differently was it with the chief apostle? Peter did not sell his Master for cash, but he denied him when in dire predica-

ment, and that, too, repeatedly and in language anything but Christian. But Peter was a strong man, full of faith and courage. He never thought (Judas like) of committing suicide. But as soon as he sensed his position, tears filled his eyes; repentance filled his soul, and prayer sprang up in his heart, as a fountain of never dying waters.

In place of adding sin to sin, as Judas had done, and as is so common with those who make great mistakes, he turned to prayer and repentance, and trusted to the mercy of him whom he had denied.

“And the Lord turned and looked upon Peter.”

Oh, that the Lord would turn and look upon every young man and every young woman in Zion, who forget the high and holy calling to which they have been called; namely, to be sons and daughters of the Most High, through faith and the sacred ordinances of God’s house.

Did the look that the Master gave Peter have anything to do with his future life? I think it must have had. It could not have been a look of anger. I think it could hardly have been one of reproach—was it not one, think you, of pity and of compassion? Be that as it may, the chief apostle experienced a compunction of conscience that nearly broke his heart—“And Peter went outside and wept bitterly.” The very angels, while filled with horror at the great tragedy being enacted in the capital of Judea, must have sympathized with the friend of God who was shedding those tears of remorse and repentance.

Thank God that the Apostle Peter did not despair, and go further into sin.

Young man, should you be so unfortunate as to fall from grace, like the Apostle Peter, like Peter, turn your face heavenward; there is the door of return and forgiveness. Do not, like Judas, add sin to sin, but, Peter-like, confess to him whom you have offended. Trust to his loving heart, and the wise counsels of those whom God has appointed to lead and show the ways out of darkness, into God’s marvelous light.

Ogden, Utah.

MAN'S FREE AGENCY.

BY FRANCIS M. SHAFER.

Know this, that every soul is free,
To choose his life, and what he'll be;
For this eternal truth is given,
That God will force no man to heaven.

Each individual born upon this planet is granted the privilege of working out his own future condition. The agency of man is ever recognized, and God's children are left to choose that which will give them eternal peace and joy, or they may take the opposite course, which will bring them misery and woe. The Lord understood the snares and pitfalls that would beset men on every side, in passing through his probation, fully realizing that these things are necessary for our advancement. Every detail connected with the gospel plan was considered by our eternal Father, and by those who were in council with him. Jewish scripture sustains the statement that the gospel is based upon truths that are eternal, and that every protection necessary for the advancement of the children of men is included in the great plan given for the salvation of the human family.

There must be two powers at work in the earth, a negative and an affirmative, otherwise progression would cease, and the purposes of the Almighty (the advancing of his children to a higher plane) would be frustrated. This was fully understood in the beginning, and the Prince of darkness, together with his angels, were permitted to visit this earth, at their own pleasure. It is their mission to influence the souls of men to evil. The scriptures declare that there must needs be offenses, but woe unto them by whom they come. If men did not experience the bitter (either practically,

or by observation,) they could not enjoy the sweet; if they did not, in a measure, sense the evil effects of darkness, they could not so readily respond to the good effects of light emanating from the Throne of grace. It is by contrast that we learn the better way.

When we stop to think of these things, we must admire the beautiful and perfect gospel plan given to the children of men by Him whose wisdom surpasses all understanding.

All men have their free agency, and may choose good or evil; but they who stand firm and steadfast in defense of truth, even in the face of the opposing powers, will finally receive the admiration and blessing of our eternal Father. May it be so with every soul who desires to do the right in the sight of God.

Moab, Utah.

THE GREATEST HEIGHT.

The path is rough, dear Lord, the way is steep,
No place have I to rest my feet.

Make smooth some spot, dear Lord, that I may gain
Release from ills, from grief and pain.

And yet, methinks, dear Lord, I should not ask
For such a boon, that I may bask
Always in light; dear Lord, help me to bear,
Complaining not, the yoke I wear.

Then comes to me, dear Lord, a thought sublime:
Of other's woe, and not of mine,
That I should think; dear Lord, help me to gain
That greatest height where Love doth reign.

GRACE INGLES FROST.

Salt Lake City, Utah.

COYOTES—A TALE OF THE HILLS.

BY CHARLES HERMAN.

I was ten years old that spring, and just "aching" to get away from the city to revel in the glow of the good old Wyoming hills, where I had spent the summers since I was a year old; and when a boy wants a thing, with his whole heart, there is always great strength in his pleadings. I think that his conviction makes his voice more earnest, and if the object to be won is not positively unattainable, he will surely win it.

And so it was with me. Near the middle of April, after a long, cold winter of hibernation, I was fairly wild to get away from home. The morning we were expecting to leave, in our covered wagon, with my little "buckskin" pony, happened to be cloudy, not exactly storm-threatening, simply a sorry sky.

I remember arising very early, after a night of restlessness, to feed our animals, and then spending nearly an hour caring for my own mount. When I finally got the saddle on her back, I gazed upon the animal with an indescribable pride. I was happy.

With this feeling of utter joy, I skipped into the house. I had only entered, however, when a remark from father came to my ear: "I think we should not start today; the sky is very threatening, to venture on so long a trip into the mountains."

There was a great fall in stocks. Instantly my throat was blocked, and I wanted to cry. To delay our expedition for even one day, after the anticipation I had endured, was most repellant to me. But after a moment's struggle, I braced myself, and the way I talked, gestured and argued that the sun would shine by noon, and that there was no use in being bluffed by a cloudy sky,

would have made any jury swerve. My father was no easy man to persuade, but finally he gave the word to go. Now, I'm not taking the credit to myself. Probably he had other reason. But it certainly served the purpose, and stocks were again soaring.

Father and I were to go, at this time, and when summer came, the family should come, and live in the old log cabin that stood just below the quaking-aspen grove. My father was a sheepman of no great possessions, and in the spring time, when lambs came to make work for extra men, he managed to do a great deal of the extra work himself, and thus save expenses. Although I was young, he felt that I could go out, and "catch on" a little.

As I rode out of the gate, after having bidden my mother an affectionate farewell, I felt exceedingly proud. For the first time in my life, I was sitting in a man's saddle, with the stirrups just the right length. No cushion, however soft, could have compared with the smooth, strong seat of that saddle. Then, as a departing token, I straightened myself in the stirrups, waved my hat, and gave the signal to go on. She did go, the little "buckskin," and the cut of the morning air was like life anew.

The distance was just five miles to the mouth of the canyon, which penetrated the Wasatch. In less than an hour we were hidden from the sight of our home by those giant hills on either side. But I did not think of home. The magnitude of nature held my mind.

At noon we stopped in a dell of the mountains, having traveled just sixteen miles. While we were eating our lunch, the first drop of rain fell, and I could see a look of worry spread over my father's face. Still I persisted in saying within myself, that I could see blue spots in the sky, and that the clouds would soon blow away. The afternoon, however, saw a steady increase in the downfall, with our road a steeper grade. I stayed on my horse and got a good soaking. Not until we were making our way through the half-thawed drifts of old snow that capped the summit of this divide, did I assent to my father's wish, and climb into the wagon. Certainly we were surrounded by conditions that would have destroyed the courage of any boy, and it seems strange to me since, that I did not think for a moment we were in despair. The reason, of course, was that I looked ahead to a place—a paradise to me. I saw only the sun, shining upon this land ahead.

The descent into East Canyon was rough and steep, but the distance was comparatively short. We were given the privilege of making a bed in an old barn, that evening, where the water dripped on us all night. The next morning I was as full of hope as ever, and still anxious to get on. That day we had snow, and for three days it continued to fall, until we were forced to stop for a time at an inn, about half way through Chalk Canyon. When we started again, there was nearly eighteen inches of snow on the level, and drifts in every hollow, causing us great struggle to get the wagon along.

We decided, after the first night, that it would be impossible to take the wagon further, so we took the front wheels off, and made a mountain cart. On this we placed only mere necessities, and began once more our heavy journey. In this manner we pushed along over some seven miles, out of the eighteen that remained of our trip. Here we got "stuck" in a bank of snow, and all efforts to extricate ourselves proved futile.

But there is always a way, so father says, and I believe him. We unhitched our team, and prepared to move on horseback. We limited our pack to the bedding and a little flour. We had now crossed the Wyoming line, and were entering the sheep country, the place chosen by flockmasters for lambing ground, because of its location near the summer ranges, and its comparative protection. This country was a basin about seven miles in width. Nowhere could one see an outlet. To the west and south towered a range of mountains, covered with a heavy growth of timber. The canyon through which we had just emerged penetrated this great wall, but all traces of the outlet were obliterated by the peculiar formation of the foothills. A ridge, almost perpendicular, rising nearly five hundred feet, formed the basin's rim to the east and north. Thus surrounded, one could easily appreciate the name Basin.

Over the hills and hollows, now made almost level by the drifted snow, roamed hundreds of wild horses, who devoured a goodly share of the grass, and were, therefore, much hated by the sheepmen.

But on our entire journey we had neither heard nor seen a trace of these wild animals, or any others. As we began our

journey anew, a faint howl, away in the distance, broke the silence and greeted our ears. It was followed by another, until we realized that the country was swarming with coyotes, made ravenous and desperate through the long storm. The heavy snow had hindered the movements of everything. The smaller animals, which form the food of these creatures, had not emerged from their winter's sleep. The sheep were also held back by the storms.

Our progress became more and more impeded. It was almost impossible to pick our way between snowdrifts, and, consequently, we were often floundering in one of these traps of nature. When we did get into such a predicament, the only thing we could do was to dismount and lead the animals through. This fell to my lot; but as I was light, the crust of the snow held me up.

My father was a cripple, having lost a limb in an accident, when very young, and he was now using a crutch. How to get through was to him a serious problem. At the first step, his crutch sank almost to his shoulder, and he fell on to his face. But where there is a will there is a way. My father, therefore, lay down on the snow, and often rolled over hundreds and hundreds of yards on that miserable day. Many times since, I have wondered how he could have had the fortitude.

I now fully comprehended the condition to which we were reduced, and my heart completely gave way. Almost simultaneously with the sinking of my spirits, a fog began to settle gradually over us, until we were enveloped in a great water-spent cloud, and all trace of landmark or direction was gone. We were lost! No use to wander and fatigue ourselves under such conditions. On the next piece of earth we touched, we did the only thing possible—stood still!

The maudlin yelp of the thievish coyotes continued, growing louder and louder! While we were moving, our minds were too much occupied with other things to notice their approach, but now that we were standing still, we heard nothing but their awful music. Cut off from the world, bound hand and foot, it seemed to me that matters could not be worse. Sitting on our horses' backs, we could scarcely see a foot from their heads, owing to the thickness of the fog.

I know not what father thought, but for myself, I was sorely

afraid. I could not control my sobs! To be candid, I lost all hope. I expected to die. My dear father's presence was my only relief, and I rode up very close to him.

The yelping was all around us. Father looked at me and said: "Be brave, my boy; you're safe!" How could I doubt him? but those howls spelled death to my child's mind.

Once during that awful period, when the howling seemed to cease for a moment, I thought of the morning we left, and seemed to realize that I was the cause of all this. Surely my youthful enthusiasm had proved of less worth than my father's judgment. "O," I cried, my spirit broken, "God save us!" The prayer, taught me by my mother, came to my heart, and I felt better: I ceased sobbing.

Imagine the situation! Two mortals imprisoned by nature, and surrounded by evil spirits, for I really believe that nothing can be so suggestive of the uncanny evil, as the howl of one of these slinking creatures! We could not see them, notwithstanding the strong evidence of their presence. Oh, it was frightful! I know my father felt it, yet he may not have dreaded death as I. Be that as it may, he clutched his crutch, as if all he asked for was a fair chance.

Sitting thus, it seemed for hours, the discordant melody appeared to be the utterances of the wall around us. Closer and closer it came. The horse that we were leading, at length gave a fearful snort, whirled around, threw off the quilts we had placed on his back, then dashed out into the oblivion of the fog. All we could hear was the clink of his harness, with now and then a frightened whinny, which brought our horses' ears to the alert.

A moment later, a black demon came rushing towards us and jumped at my horse's head. As the beast dropped to the ground again, father leaned forward and struck it fairly on the head, with the crutch. It fell on its side and twisted a moment, then struggled to its feet again, and staggered out to its invisible comrades.

After this, I was positive that I could see the demons darting hither and thither all around us. I thought so again, when father's horse gave a quick plunge forward, from an attack in the rear, as we afterwards learned. Luckily, father had a good hold on

the reins. Those moments seemed years! Would the fog never leave and give us an opportunity to fight for our lives? Why should we be made helpless and then attacked?

Our horses were becoming unmanageable now, and we felt that if the fog continued our end was near. I sat stiff in my saddle, braced against the bridle reins, struggling to keep my horse under control. The poor animals were terribly frightened, and they quivered until their knees were almost touching the ground.

The strain was becoming unbearable, with the horses struggling so fiercely. Suddenly there came, from a seemingly great distance, a faint roar as of rushing wind. Its volume grew until we felt that something desperate would soon happen. But it gave us hope, though we could not imagine what it was. But anything was a relief.

Every moment the sound grew nearer, until it seemed suddenly to burst upon us. Then, looking ahead only a few feet, we beheld a black mass rushing by. From the sound, we knew it was a band of wild horses, followed by a pack of hungry demons. It was the hand of Providence in the form of a band of much persecuted mustangs. The coyotes that were tormenting us fell in with the more exciting game, and left us. Thank God! It was some minutes, however, before we knew that they had gone. As the roar of the retreating horses died away, and no further attacks were made on us, we began to realize that we were saved.

With the going of our tormentors, the fog lifted, or rather blew away, for we could see it—a heavy cloud stayed in its progress by the ridge to the east. The fog lifted from our hearts, also, and left us as humble and thankful as two mortals could be.

All around we beheld the tracks of the baffled coyotes, and tracks of blood followed the prints of the beast father had struck. We estimated that there must have been nearly one hundred horses in the band, by the trail they left, for, owing to the numerous hills to the west, we could not get sight of the animals themselves.

Another mile of struggle, and we found ourselves ready to climb the ridge skirting the eastern boundary of the basin. The ascent was steep, but we found a good trail, and managed to

keep out of the deep snow. Thus, in due course of time, we were standing on the brow of the ridge, looking back with trembling, I confess, on my part, over the scenes that had been so horrible to us. Away over, across, was the mountain covered with heavy timber, and just under the timber's edge, stood that band of horses, glad to rest after their wild chase. We could observe the trail they had made across the basin; and not more than one-quarter of a mile from where we were imprisoned, lay a large object. Around it, like a swarm of ants, were the persistent coyotes, feasting on the carcass of the poor horse.

As we stood thus, thinking, the sun touched the top of yonder mountain, and creeping slowly down, spread its beneficent rays over the basin, then climbed up to us, and kissed our weary souls with that golden spirit which only the weary can appreciate. Our hearts answered, "Surely we were in hell, and have arisen to heaven."

Salt Lake City, Utah.

ALONE AMONG OTHER HILLS.

Far in a distant country, where a noble forest grows,
One morning lone I wandered, just as the sun arose;
I heard the songsters warbling, and music from the rills;
My heart was light and happy, alone among the hills.
I felt the cool, soft breezes blow softly through the pines;
There, in the deep recesses, where sunset ray ne'er shines,
Lay pure white snow in patches, like stars in skies of jet;
A thrill of joy came o'er me, my soul shall ne'er forget
Far down the level valley, the slumbering hamlets lay,
And from the distant river, rose hazy mists of gray,
Like incense burnt from altars, which vanished in the air;
The slow descending sunbeams spread radiance ev'rywhere.
All around and all above, on the crystal atmosphere,
Rose tender waves of fragrance, from flow'rets far and near;
And, likewise, deep within me, rose a wave of mem'ries sweet;
I stood there, awed in silence, by grandeur so complete.
That dreamful scene has vanished, and those hills are far away,
I roam no more those woodlands, to greet the coming day;
But still a faint remembrance fills my soul with joyous thrills,
I long once more to wander alone among the hills.

JESSE WINTER SMITH.

Germany, 1901.

THE BON FESTIVAL.

BY ELDER SANDFORD WELLS HEDGES, OF THE JAPANESE MISSION.

The meaning of the word "bon" is wooden tray, and when an additional combination is made it means a feast in memory of the dead.

The corresponding day in the lunar calendar for August 23 is July 13, and beginning on that day the above mentioned festival is celebrated.

News reached me that the evening of August 23, would be unusually warm, as many bonfires were to be built in honor of the feast. Of course, it was rather difficult to conceive that the climatic conditions would be affected by the heat caused by a bonfire, when the longest lasts but five or ten minutes; but the anticipation of enjoying the feast must have cast a spell over the people, similar in effect to that felt by our young people when at the approach of an ice cream party, they say there will be a "hot time," even though it may be in the dead of winter.

Well, desiring to learn the significance and meaning of the ceremonies used in connection with a feast, a conversation with a friend was begun. It required judgment to inquire about subjects pertaining to old and quaint beliefs and customs of the people, as they endeavor to evade all such talks, thinking that foreigners might make fun and chide them severely for believing in such trash, as the foreigners often style such actions. True to all Christians, the religious customs and beliefs of a heathen nation appear very crude and meaningless, but I allow that every one is entitled to his or her belief, and when we foreigners cannot place ourselves in the position of our friend and brother, then it is our

duty to say nothing offensive to the worshipers, as their worship is just as sacred and full of meaning to them, as ours is to us.

The conversation was begun, and to my satisfaction my friend kindly answered my questions, telling me many interesting ceremonies pertaining to the feast. However, before the conversation began, the ceremony was performed, thus giving me the practical side first.

Taking a handful of "ogara" (the stem of hemp after the bark has been removed), my friend placed it at the entrance to the house, and ignited it with a match. One large blaze and a few cracks consumed most of the hemp. Next I noticed each one present take some flowers, dipping them in a basin of water, then sprinkling water on the fire until it was put out. Also, each person took a pipe, lit it by the fire, and took a puff or two of tobacco. These were my observations, and surely quite meaningless they were to me, but the conversation afterward enabled me to attach some meaning to it all.

Makalbi or *kadobi*, means fire kindled before the door of a house on the 13th of July, to welcome and receive the spirits of the dead ones, who pay their respects to this world for a few days during this great festival. The conveyance in which the spirits come back to this earth is very odd. A figure of a horse made from white *cumber*, and one of a cow made from egg-plant, are supposed to carry the departed spirit to this earth.

Whether the customs of the people had any influence in the framing of certain religious rites, or whether the religion was a base from which the customs were formed, I am not prepared to say, but it is a noticeable fact that the two correspond exactly in many instances.

The foot-covering of the people is such that after a walk or ride of any length, the dust has accumulated to such an extent that it becomes necessary to at least rub off the dust with a damp rag before entering a house. Now, to have everything in perfect order for the reception of the dead one's spirit, a mixture of boiled, blue beans and rice is placed in the shrine by the horse and cow, to be used in washing the feet of the spirit before it enters the shrine, for the spirit always goes to the shrine.

A question in regard to the flowers used in extinguishing the

fire brought the reply that their names were the Bon Festival flower, the *lespedeza*, *bicolot*, the purple loose stripe, and the rush. It is absolutely necessary that the first three flowers be used, the other, or fourth one, may or may not be used, as the person chooses. As has been stated before, each Japanese present sprinkled some water on the fire, the object not only being to extinguish it, but also to invoke blessings from above. The purpose of taking a puff of tobacco, lighted from the fire, I learned, was that the person who participated in that ceremony should not contract a cold or become subject to pimples.

“*Yakigome kui-kui o cha monde oide nasai*,” or translated into English, “While you eat this baked rice, deign to come in and have a drink of tea,” is a prayer which is offered while sprinkling the water on the fire.

The objects in the shrine were interesting. There was tea, water, candy, squash, millet, and a kind of vermicella. These were offered as a gift to the departed spirit. There was also a package containing candles and incense sticks, tied up with a string half white and half black. This color of string is very necessary.

Each night during the feast some one of the family must go to the graveyard, taking with him or her some small coin, incense, and the *shikibi* flower, together with a delicate-colored lantern, and there perform some act of adoration, the character of which I did not learn.

After the ceremony is over, they return, hang the lantern up, letting the candle slowly burn away.

Just a line or so more, then I will end. The *shikibi* flower is constantly used in different ceremonies, the flower being one (the meaning of which I do not know) which comes under my observation.

When a person dies, the remaining members of the family each pick a leaf from the flower, dip some water up in it, and pour it down the dead one's throat.

So much for the Bon Festival.

Sendai, Japan, Oct. 12, 1905.

A WINTER'S FROLIC.

(For the Improvement Era.)

Jack Frost climbed up in a tree, one day,
Where the leaves lie dead, and the branches sway
Hither and thither in' rolicking glee—
O boys, jolly boys, come frolic with me!
We'll climb, if you dare, to the mountain's crest
Where the snowflakes sleep and the cloudlets rest;
And we'll throw a sheet on the sleepers there,
And fasten them down, till the sunbeams rare
Shall loosen their bands, and bid them go free,
To dance with the violets down to the sea.

And then we will mount on the spangled wings
Of beauteous night; as the north wind sings,
We'll fly far away o'er hillock and dale,
And weave, as we go, a shining veil
With which to adorn the window panes
Of the cozy cottages, down in the lanes;
Then we'll steal through the halls, and softly creep
Into the rooms where the village belles sleep;
And when they awake—ha! ha! what fun—
We'll pinch their noses, and away we'll run,
To set a snare for some school boy's feet,
As he hurries along the slippery street.

“Don't forget the school girls,” h'm, let me see:
They mustn't fall down, but they can't go free;
So we'll bite their red cheeks and nip their ears,
And stiffen their toes—but hark! to their cheers
The old-fashioned bob swings round to the gate,
And in they scramble, they scarcely can wait
For foot-bricks and shawls; and the horses, proud
Of the jingling bells and the laughter loud,
Are pawing the ground; O boys! see them go!
Over the ice and the beautiful snow!
Waving their hands and shouting for joy:
“Hurrah for Jack Frost, he's a merry old boy.”

RUTH MAY FOX.

Salt Lake City, Utah.

SIEGES-ALLEE.

EDITED BY LYDIA D. ALDER. TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN BY
G. ALFRED ALDER AND CHARLES J. THOMAS, LATE
MISSIONARIES TO GERMANY.

I.

The Victory avenue, in the Thiergarten, in Berlin, had its origin in the resolve of his majesty, the Kaiser and King, to do something in an artistic, ornamental way, for the city of Berlin.

He made his resolve known to the city authorities, on January 27, 1895, as follows:

A quarter of a century is nearly gone since the German people, obedient to the call of its princes, rose in unanimity to ward off the attacks of strangers, and, in glory, though with heavy sacrifices to endure, achieved the union of the Fatherland, and raised it to its station among the nations.

This my native city, Berlin, took a very active part, sparing neither trouble nor means, bearing a heavy apportionment, corresponding with her municipal arrangements, and her position in the kingdom.

As a sign of my recognition of the city, and in remembrance of the ambitious past of the Fatherland, from the founding of the Mark Brandenburg, to the present time, my plan is this: In the Sieges-Allee, to erect marble statues of the princes of Brandenburg and Prussia, to begin with the Mark Graf Albrecht, the Bear, and ending with the time of Kaiser and King William I., and with each the bust of the two main characters of his time, whether soldier, statesman or citizen. They are to be arranged in a row, one after the other.

The whole cost of this I will bear myself, but reserve to myself the details of the plan and arrangements. I take pleasure in making the matter known to the magistrate and city authorities on my birthday, January 27, 1895.

WILLIAM R.

The original plan was further developed so that each ruler should be a standing figure, the two main men to be busts.

On March 22, 1898, the first three groups were unveiled, in

the presence of his Majesty the Kaiser. Dr. Koser, general director of the state's archives, was commissioned to write the following biographies. The text was written by Prof. Dr. Sternfeld:

THE SIEGE-ALLEE,

or Victory street, is wide, and paved. At one end is the grand Victory monument, erected by the Germans in honor of their victory over France, in the Franco-Prussian war.

A woman of dazzling appearance, with wide flowing skirts of gold, a wreath of golden flowers in her hands, is at the top. Around its sides in four rows are thirty-eight cannon, mounted in gold, which were captured from the French. The dark gray of the monument is further relieved by war scenes of that momentous time. At the other end of the street is the artistic fountain *Roland brunnen* with its streams of silvery spray. The Sieges-Allee, thus enclosed, contains the story of Germany in statuary, in number, thirty-two groups, sixteen on either side of the street.

Dense banks of foliage, as a back ground, set off their dazzling whiteness, and the proud row of princely rulers, in robes of state, or the mail of war, are surrounded by beds of variegated flowers, so beautiful in the Thiergarten.

It is admitted that this street is a perpetual menace to France, which was so humiliated by Germany. Whether it was so intended or not, there it is, the greatest national monument to war in the world, unique, imposing, grand. In it, Kaiser William perpetuates his name to the latest day, as one of the greatest minds of his generation. As a collective work of art, it is unsurpassed; as a design, unrivaled; as a history, like to none; as a street decorated and embellished, the grandest in the world. There, within the Thiergarten, Berlin's most beautiful and extensive park, where all may survey, and surveying, inspire in all hearts the love of the Fatherland, is the street of monuments, which commemorates the chivalry, wealth, pomp and power of the united German kingdom.

Only one woman's face is to be seen among all this array of warriors, "Fairy beautiful" she is called. Her name was Elizabeth, and she was an Elector princess of the Willelbasher line.

Her picture is shown on the back of the marble bench of the group, Fredrich I. 1415-1440.

This street or avenue, being completed, the kaiser has caused to be erected, just beyond the Thor (Brandenburg Portal) which leads to the beautiful street *Unter Den Linden*, so called for its many linden trees, an artistic white monument, and a fountain that foams and glistens in the sun, to the memory of his royal parents, Princess Victoria of England and Kaiser Fredrick III, king of Prussia.

FIRST GROUP, MARK GRAF (EARL) OR COUNT—ALBRECHT THE BEAR, 1132-1170; WIGGER, BISHOP OF BRANDENBURG, AND OTTO, BISHOP FROM BRANBERG.

Albrecht the Bear, founder of the Mark Brandenburg, with the cross uplifted in his right hand turned east to the land of Slavonia, to establish Christianity. Albrecht descended from the family count from Ballenstedt, the Hartz country. They called themselves after their burg, Aschisarian, not far from Ascher's *laben* also Ascharian or Askamir. He was born about the year 1100; as the son of Count Otto and his Countess Eilica or (Hehoich), daughter of Duke Magnus of Saxon.

Albrecht served the German kaiser Lothar true, against his foes, and received from him as reward, in 1134, the North Mark, afterwards designated as Old Mark.

The new earl, from here, undertook new attacks in the heathen Slavonic lands, which had already been under the Dutch kaiser, but which, in 983 A. D. were lost to the Dutch kingdom. These lands were situated on the other side of the Elbe and Havel (Hafel) rivers.

He waged a holy war against the North German princes, even against the Slavs in Mechlenburg and Pommern. At the same time he began a systematic colonization. He called aggressive colonists out of the German home, also from the lower Rhine and Flanders. He protected their claims with his sword. In this still colonization, he soon successfully competed with, and outstripped, them (the Slavs.)

The priests, particularly the monks of the Christian order, preached the gospel to the heathen, and taught them how to re-

claim the swamps and forests. Knights, citizens and peasants spread over the land, and were united as one man in its care, and against the Slavs. After many hard combats, the Slavs were entirely subdued. Also in the affairs of the German Kingdom, Albrecht attained a very prominent place. He fought for King Conrad III, against the more powerful Welsh. He also served under Frederick Barbarossa, whom he guided on his trip to Rome, 1162. This surname of the Bear, had spread over the middle world, and an old saying has placed him in equal rank and birth with his two great contemporaries.

Henry the Lion and Albrecht the Bear
Dares Frederick with the red hair,
These were the three men
Who could turn the world back.

OTTO, BISHOP OF BAMBERG.

In the years from 1103-1139, he found his place at the side of Albrecht the Bear, because he, like him, had been of the greatest service in spreading Christianity among the heathen Slavs on the Oder and the Baltic seas. With religious fervor Otto united wisdom and munificence. Twice he went to Pommern endeavoring to convert them. In Pyritz (where King Frederick William III erected a monument to him), he began his baptism sermons.

Albrecht, the Bear, befriended him, and as the Bishop, in 1128, started on his second mission trip to Pommern. Albrecht's envoys guided the company that took provisions and other things to the converts, and on the petition of the Earl, the Kaiser loaned the Bishop the tribute from five Wendish districts on the Peen, four of which belonged to the North Mark. Otto of Bamberg, "the apostle to the Pommerns," was spoken of him in a reverential way, after his death.

WIGGER, BISHOP OF BRANDENBURG,

was of the order Praymonstratenser, which was founded in France and had extended to North Germany. He did much good for the mission and the civilizing efforts that were put forth. He was first monk at Cappenberg, in Westfalen, then was father to our beloved sisters at Magdeburg, and later founded, 1130, at the re-

quest of the converted Wendish Prince Prebislan, of Brandenburg, the Orders convent Parduin, on a Havel island by Brandenburg. He was, in 1138, ordained Bishop of Brandenburg, and could, with the chapter of the church, turn back to banishment again, the heathen-torn land.

After twenty years of official activity he died, about the year 1160, and is buried at Brandenburg, in the St. Godehard church.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

A WARNING.

In the morn of life's great battle,
 Speak this poem from thy heart.
 Let its truth shine all around you;
 Let the tho'ts herein protect you
 From old Gossip's fiery dart.

Be not hasty in your efforts,
 To prove false your dearest friend,
 Better far your heart should soften,
 Better trust him once too often,
 Than that friendship true should end.

Do not be too prone to credit
 All the baseness that you hear,
 Of some neighbor in the village,
 Whom the gossips love to pillage,
 Of the virtues he holds dear.

Do not search at all for baseness,
 You will find it if you do;
 Better far you take this warning:
 Probe your heart each night and morning,
 Search it carefully through and through.

Search for vice germs and uproot them,
 Lest they in your heart shall grow.
 Speak no evil of your neighbor,
 Then will God your humble labor
 Bless, and love on you bestow

M. R. TANNER.

St Joseph, Arizona.

A NEW YEAR'S SHRINE.

BY SUSAN YOUNG GATES.

"We are going to have a white New Year's day as well as a white Christmas," said the lady as she stood at the western window of her upper chamber.

"And isn't that a very proper, and a very healthful New Year's and Christmas to have, mother mine," answered her tall and beautiful daughter, as she pinned her hat with numerous pretty daggers, before the quaint, oval mirror. "What is it the English say about a white Christmas making a green Easter?" she added, as she drew on her worn but neat gloves.

"I don't remember what the English say, I'm sure," absently replied the lady mother, as she moved away from the window and prepared to follow her daughter down the stairs.

"I should fancy you'd be thinking all the time about the English, mother," laughed the girl over her shoulder.

"Why so?" again absently replied the lady.

"Well, I am sure if I had a son over in Great Britain, and was also reviving ancient English history, as your old lover is doing for you, I think I myself should be somewhat alive to the habits and customs of the tight little Isle."

"What nonsense," murmured the lady, a slight flush rising upon her smooth cheek. "What do you think your father would say to hear you speak that way?"

"Father?" answered the girl gayly, "Why he'd just laugh as I do, and as you ought to do, at the absurdity of the situation. In all my life, I never heard of anything quite so romantic and quite so queer. But I must hurry now, or I shall not be at my post in

time. O, dear, the modern methods of observing the holidays with parties and gifts for the school children, and the Sunday school children, and the kindergarten children, are just about destructive of both the Christmas ideal and the Christmas idea. We Americans, and especially we western Americans, are so strenuous. I long for a quiet, old-fashioned Christmas and New Year's, all our own, mother dear. But—" And the girl folded her furs about her neck and ran down the front steps, the cool air calling up into cheeks and lips a mild pink glow.

The mother watched, with lingering eyes, the tall, graceful form swing down the hill, and she could but admit the beauty and grace of the delicately-poised head, the firm, yet soft outline of cheek and chin, the brown hair coiled in a mass of golden shade, low in the neck. And more than all was the subtle something which surrounded the whole figure with an atmosphere of highbred charm.

"Divinely tall and most divinely fair," quoted the lady under her breath. The words called up a vista of a long past experience in her own life—or, perhaps, who may tell—the long-past experience which had been hovering about her memory for weeks, had called to her mind the lover who had quoted those same lovely English lines to her when she, too, was young and fair.

The lady's eyes wandered up and down the street from her vantage point. The house behind her was tall and stately, yet some fate had stayed the restless, ambitious hands which had essayed to build a mansion in this commanding situation. Three high stories and a basement make a tall house in a busy western town like Salt Lake City, but in spite of its unfinished condition there was still an air of proud gentility about the plain structure. If the builder's hand had not been checked, some gracious lines of beauty had been added to the massive, high brick walls by pillared porches or more modest porticos. But even so, with only a pair of uncovered steps leading up to the heavy front door, there was a glimpse of the solid, stately thought which had inspired this dwelling with its honest red bricks, softened and faded by time and rude weather. It stood on a western hillside which sloped rapidly down to the low valley rolling swiftly onward to the western horizon where the blue salt sea kissed the deep blue sky.

The lady saw, scarcely noting the most familiar features of close-clustered cottages below and above her; all were bowered in summer with trees and green vines. But now the skeleton limbs of the trees lay resting on the quiet air, awaiting, as all nature waits, with slow, still breath the coming snow. The serrated outlines of the Oquirrh's were covered with a snowy mist, while even the familiar low haze of smoke in the valley at their feet had taken a deeper, dingier hue from the white reflection of pale cloud above, and white-covered mountain peaks around the valley.

The lady's eyes were busy with the signs of the coming snow, but she kept watch of the street until her daughter's form had turned southward. And then, with a quiet sigh, she turned into her house.

There were many tasks for the lady's hands to accomplish; but as she worked, some lines wove harmonious discord in and out of the other busy thoughts in her brain.

"Divinely tall and most divinely fair—" with what facility he could quote poetry, that lover of long ago. And how earnest were his eyes, and how tender were the tones of his voice. And yet—those mince pies must not stay in the oven a moment longer. And yet—"Not wisely, but too well"—the words floated through her thoughts with mischievous persistence. Those were his last words to her—well—she had parted with him with the same kindly indifference which had marked her every hour's acquaintance with him, that lover of long ago! Three eggs, a pint of milk, a cup of sugar—and why should he haunt her memory now! The same kindly indifference marked her every thought of him, and his recent rather odd correspondence.

That telephone again! "Yes; yes; I am sorry, but I have an engagement. New Year's day always finds me at home, you know! Maybe so, it may sound selfish—but I am old-fashioned, you know. Yes, quite so. But you must please excuse me, goodbye, goodbye."

"Telephones are a nuisance when one is in the basement, just when one is ready to put cake in the oven."

"'Not wisely, but too well'—the fire is too low; the coal is a long way from the kitchen. But this house was built for servants, not

for one woman—'divinely tall, and most divinely fair.' Pshaw! What a persistent and stupid companion memory can be!"

The shrill front door-bell buzzed three times, and the lady hurried to answer the postman's ring. Two letters! And both from England! One from her beloved boy, so far away, and one from the long ago lover who had so recently been thrust back into the quiet channels of her life.

The lady looked at the square, pale blue envelopes, and turned them over in her hands. With the occasional stern straightening, which came at times into the soft curved lips, she took them both unopened into the long, old-fashioned sitting room, and setting them upright against the clock, on the mantel, she went out and shut them in to await the evening, and the return of the absent ones.

The afternoon hours sped by. The whole lower part of the house was saturated with the odors of spices, sweets and roasting meats. The basement dining-room, with its plain, old-fashioned, cane-seated chairs, and folding-leaf table, shone with cleanliness and comfort. The western windows were packed full with geraniums, petunias, nasturtiums, and mignonette. The cane-seated, armed rocker still held the soft silk patch-work cushion made in the now distant crazy patch-work period. But the heavy crocheted anti-Macassar shad been folded away in the garret by the daughter's progressive hands, on her return from the eastern school, a few years before. The honest stove of thirty years before had never been replaced by a furnace; and now its radiant black surface glistered and whispered of comfort to every cold wavelet which stole in from the large ventilating crevices opened by the capable daughter of the house.

And the dining-table! It was in strict keeping with the large house and its three occupants. For it was stretched out to a length which would have accommodated three times the people who were to sit down to its generous repast. An old-fashioned cruet stand, in the center of the table, was flanked by two tall, crystal vases, with beautiful, pink tea-roses pluming themselves in their stately beauty. The napkins rested harmoniously between old, well-worn Sheffield knives, and glossy, new silver forks. Homemade pickles and jelly brightened one side of the festal board, while up-

to-date stuffed olives and salted almonds filled in the broad spaces on the dazzling white cloth.

The tall, New England clock in the dining-room intoned four, long, hollow notes, and the lady closed the doors of the room, and drawing off her apron, she ascended the stairs to wait for the good man of the house, who was often late, but who would surely be on time tonight, and the tired daughter who was rarely late, but might be on this busy New Year's day.

The fire in the huge sitting-room needed replenishing, for the evening shadows were bringing cooler breaths from the hills and canyons. It took a long afternoon of glowing heat in the big round stove to warm the high ceilings, and the cold walls of this immense, unsheltered eastern room, on the first floor. There was also a fire in the grate under the mantel; and as all the day's work was now done and awaiting only the final hour of triumphant results at the glittering table below, the lady drew a low chair to the blaze, and sat down to rest and wait.

The thoughts which had been so persistent through the day now centered themselves around the two letters on the mantel before her. There had been other letters, both from her son and the time-old lover of hers. But these last two she would not open till her two loved ones were home to share them with her.

"Not wisely, but too well"—he had quoted that in one of his letters recently, which one was that?

She arose, and going to the desk, which was a heavy, but antiquated combination of bookcase and desk, she drew out a small packet of letters.

Drawing the rubber band away, she looked at the fan-like array of thin-enveloped letters that spread out in her hands.

"I have never taken the time to look them over and place them in their proper order," she thought, with that qualm of conscience which assails the orderly housekeeper who fails in one small item of systematic arrangement.

She drew the letters out from the enclosures, and searched through their dates to find the first.

"Here it is," she said half aloud. "He addresses me as quaintly as ever," she murmured.

"Dear lady!"—"He used to call me My Lady!" she thought;

but the thought failed, somehow, to quicken, with ever such a shadowy remembrance, the pulse-beats in her steady throat.

"Dear lady," and the lady's eyes traveled on over the difficult, English, angular handwriting, for there was nothing better to occupy her mind in this quiet waiting time:

Where will this letter find you? And how? Will you take time from your busy life to answer me these questions? And may I tell you without intrusion of where I am, and of what my lonely life holds for me?

I would not thus adventure, did I not know, through the best of authority, your son, that you are still alive, well, and, let me believe, happy, as happy as you well deserve.

This last sounds very trite to my ears as I read it over, and I marvel thereat. For in all my thoughts and dreams, when once I should have speech with you again, no common words, no poor or mean expressions should mar that gracious intercourse.

And I? What details of four walls, of English woods and English hills, would paint the picture to your eyes of where the I, who knew you once so well, am housed. I live, and in these later years have found some mead of hope and consolation in stern occupation.

The lady rose, and stirred the fire down.

"He has the same old predilection for vague ideas and misty explanations. How difficult he could be!" thought she, as she once more prepared to resume her reading. "I wonder if he really works!"

"And you? the letter read, "your son needs not to tell—for in his clear eyes and broad, fair brow, on which truth and intelligence are stamped with noble lines, I read the record of your life. 'Tis all I dreamed you would become. I have asked but few questions. Yet would I hear from your own lips some record of your life's fulfilment.

"And he? The man who is the father of your son. I must be just. And therefore, surely is he good and true; else,—nay, there is no else."

The letter fluttered to her lap, while the lady's thoughts wandered to that father of her boy. A gentle smile lifted the thoughtful corners of her mouth, as the sturdy image of her good husband rose before her. No, he was not even tall. Yet he was not short nor meanly insignificant. His frame was knit by winds and waves of toil and struggle into that broad usefulness which sits so lightly and so well upon the pioneer. Nor was he handsome; yet, always

her thoughts dwelt cheerily on the firm capacity of squared chin and piercing, hazel eyes. He had never achieved wealth nor fame; yet, in her heart she bowed, and always had, to that high-manhood which could never compromise in least degree with sin. He had ambitions—and she loved him for that—but he also had ideals. And life had not been able to harmonize the two for him. And certainly, he could not quote poetry! A little inward laugh rippled up to her throat at thought of her good husband quoting poetry! She slowly picked up another letter and read the second one:

“You have answered my letter! And all the earth and sky is green and blue for me today.

“Your letter was so like my lady, my lady who is still divinely tall and most divinely fair. ’Tis filled with question marks and interrogatories. Why question life so closely? We live, and soon we die. And is that not enough? Yet will I fashion some replies.

“About your son: a British mob had pelted him with rotten eggs for singing hymns upon a street corner. It happened, strange enough, within the town near which my own home lies, and the mob was largely made of my own farm hands. The British mind objects to truths that are too new or even are too old. You Yankees ought to know how long it takes for Yankee wit and Yankee thought to penetrate the skull of slow John Bull. Yet, plant it there, and there it lies till death and hell are swallowed up. Your son objects, and rather naturally, to eggs when used as missiles, especially when they’ve passed the eating stage. And I? Well, in common with my fellow Britishers, I have some sympathy for the under dog. I had no idea who the hero of the egg fusillade was, and certainly he could not guess that I had once lived in far off Western America, nor, more astounding still, that I was once a privileged friend of his sweet mother. However, the boy and I were soon good friends. And when I had driven off my peasants, and had carried him and his companions off to my home, I sat him down opposite me, and while he ate at my welcome table, I scanned his features and studied him through his quiet conversation. He is like you, my lady! with few words; but ah, the words float out upon such tuneful waves of sound. My hungry ears drank up his voice, and still I cried for more. My questions led his quiet speech to paint for me the wondrous changes in that grey-green valley near your salt sea. Houses,

great and fine, there must be; steam and electricity have wrought their marvels there as elsewhere on the earth; and into the blue dome above the mountain tops pierces your Temple's golden spire. The Temple walls were low and grim with slow fulfilment, when last I walked upon their wide foundations; thirty years build many Temples, and sometimes thirty years suffice to crumble all the walls of hope and faith which youth and pious teaching reared in boyish hearts. I looked with saddened memories upon the once familiar picture of the busy city near the Inland Sea, which once I knew and loved. I have a rough print of it upon my walls, as it was thirty years ago, and showed it to your son. He was too well bred to ask me how and when and where, but I saw the questions all in his clear eyes, the eyes that are so nearly like his mother's. And so I told him if he would come to my home and spend a week, I would tell him all my story. 'Tis such a short one, and I am not loth to tell to him or to you that your name is written large on every page, I need not hesitate to tell him that, nor you, for I am old and grey, and life has lost its twang; the sparkle's gone, and the heart's dregs are stale and flat."

The lady rose and let the letters fall in sudden shapeless heaps upon the velvet rug. She stood beside the eastern window and watched the grey gloom which night and snow were bringing over mountain crests and valley plains.

Her wanderer's lingered; so back she walked with unhasting steps, and once more read her letters.

"Your son was interested in my story. Far more than ever were you, or now would be. His eyes upon my face seemed almost lifting up the veil from that secret chamber which no man opens but to the woman he loves? What is it Browning says about a man having two soul sides, one which he opens to the world, the other only to the woman he loves. I told your son the story of an English boy, caught up by the wave of religious fervor, which even steady English blood may sometimes feel, and cast upon the far off shores of America's dead sea. Friendless and poor, because he chose to turn his back on friends and home. Your people gave him welcome, and some there were who offered home and work. He could not eat the bread of charity, nor would he dip the idler's crust in any sop. And so you saw him first. Do you recall him?

Old hat, and shabby clothes, an awkward lad atop of loads of quarried rock for those same Temple walls which now are glistening grey in noonday glare, but white and pale beneath the moon's soft flame. You never laughed at me, my lady; and yet you always made me think of your own valley hills when soft, white flakes of snow were twirling round them. So sweetly cold, so hid by nature's veil of purity, that not a thought of gross or carnal quality might penetrate within."

The lady's lips were curved in something like a questioning smile.

"I wonder if he thinks me such an iceberg," she murmured. Her eyes turned to the window; outside the fluttering snow flowers fell on pane and sill, and soon their silent tracery would frame the hills and vales, e'en the mountain tops, with pure white velvet.

The letter read:

And yet you were so kind, so kind. My very heart was but a cushion upon which you set your foot. I tried, so many times, to tell you how I felt. But when I tried, a mist of snow crept from your chin to brow, and then your eyes shone through the mist as clear as your own skies in winter, and they were quite as cold. A year of toiling hope, and faithless toil. I pray you, do not blame my love for you with my departure from your city. It may have helped to feed the strong impulse which swept me back to England's shores. But even when you scorned my love, I could not answer scorn for scorn. Yet 'twas not that which drove me from your church, if from it I have gone. I heard your preachers tell one time about the blood of Gentiles; and how that blood, when once it flows in human veins cannot be stayed around low altar steps; but it must sweep its way to worldly marts and halls of luxury. Perhaps 'twas that, who knows? that sent me far from you and all your people. I have treasured some few things."

"What a strange man," the lady whispered, as she laid the letters in her desk.

But hark! There the lady's wanderers are at the very door!

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

TOPICS OF MOMENT.

BY DR. J. M. TANNER, SUPERINTENDENT OF CHURCH SCHOOLS.

The End of Korea.

The last days of November witnessed the end of the Hermit Kingdom, which for years has been one of the most corruptly governed nations of the world. Intrigue, deception, cruelty, and profligacy have been the terms very generally applied by writers to the administration of its government, and the conduct of the Korean court. Seoul, its capital, just before the outbreak of the Russo-Japanese war, was the scene of foreign intrigue, which finally ended in the supremacy of Russian influence. Japan very well knew that if Korea were left to deal with other countries on her own account, there would be no end of trouble by reason of the constant efforts made for supremacy and for special favors by bribes which a corrupted monarch was ever willing to take. Seoul's foreign diplomacy has been, perhaps, the greatest burlesque in modern times. The administration of the finances of the kingdom has also been one of unmitigated graft, in which a few favored appointees of the emperor enriched themselves at the expense and degradation of the masses, and to the exclusion of all public improvements.

The Japanese have just been going through the formality of a conference with the Korean emperor and his cabinet, in which the Koreans acquiesced to the four following demands: 1. The appointment by Japan of an administrator, whose duty it was to govern Korea under the Korean emperor. 2. The appointment of Japanese for the administration of the duties collected at all Korean ports. 3. The assumption of all diplomatic affairs by the

Japanese at Tokyo. 4. No arrangements to be made between Korea and foreign governments without the consent of the Japanese.

In the first place, the Japanese administrator, who is to govern Korea under its emperor, will be the real, if not the nominal head of the empire. The emperor will be in a similar position to the khedive of Egypt—a mere figurehead. The arrangement will at least gratify, in one measure, the vanity of the Korean emperor, who may ride about in his carriage of state accompanied by the royal guard, and may hold social functions at the palace; but with the real administration of government he will have but little to do. His consent and his signature may be necessary, but they will be purely formal.

What is of far-reaching consequence, however, to Japan is her ability, hereafter, to conduct the foreign affairs of the Hermit Kingdom from Tokyo. There will be no intrigues for exclusive concessions in the matter of building railroads and cutting down the forests along the Yalu, such as Russia was enabled to obtain during the time when her influence controlled at Seoul. Korea, hereafter, will be merely a province of Japan, and, perhaps, when the present emperor dies, the Japanese may conclude to do away with the figurehead altogether.

This is an important announcement to the world, as it means the development of the resources of Korea, and the growth of the foreign trade. This change is no less advantageous to the great masses of the Koreans themselves, as they will, hereafter, enjoy enlarged privileges, and some opportunities for intellectual growth. Their liberties will be extended, and the country in which they live will be greatly improved.

The Revolution in Russia.

The revolution that has been on for some months in Russia is unlike anything with which history has heretofore made us familiar. In the first place, Russia represents, today, the greatest state socialism, in that a considerable number of industries are directly under the management of the country, which guarantees the employment of hundreds of thousands of men. One of the reasons which influenced Russia, perhaps the strongest reason, was

the monopoly of an industry, and the income that would naturally accrue therefrom to the government. Perhaps one of the most enormous monopolies, in a country like Russia, where the drink-habit is so universal and so strong, is the liquor traffic, which in that country, today, is in the hands of the government. But the activity of the government is not confined simply to the manufacture and sale of liquor, it enters the industrial life of the empire itself. Railroads, iron foundries, and hundreds of machine-shops operated by the government, make the relationship between the workmen and the government closer in Russia than in any other country. The advocates of Socialism are not likely to find much comfort in the sort of socialism that obtains in Russia today.

A secondary purpose, in the state socialism in Russia, has been to make the employees more dependent upon the government, and, therefore, more loyal. In the recent revolution, however, the power of state socialism has acted like a two-edged sword. It has cut both ways; and by strikes, the workmen succeeded in effecting a revolution in the dominions of the Czar, and of demonstrating how effective their organization is in compelling concessions to its demands. The example of the industrial class in Russia today will give courage and aggressiveness to the industrial masses, not only in the United States, but in European countries.

The character of the Russian people is so unlike that of other nationalities, where revolutions have been successfully engineered, that no safe prediction respecting the outcome from the general disturbances there can be made. The Russians themselves incline somewhat toward anarchy, and have shown little respect for any permanent institutions which have signalized the growth of liberty in other countries. It is not easy to regard self-government among the Russians with the same assurances with which it is regarded among the Anglo-Saxon or Germanic races. What a Slav will do under enlarged liberty can only be guessed at. What seems remarkable, in view of the prediction of the past about his natural tendencies toward anarchy, is that it must be said he has shown remarkable conservatism during these troublous times in Russia.

The revolution itself must prove largely successful, since the

discontent with the government, and the settled determination that liberty must be enjoyed by its people, have taken root in all departments of the government service, as well as among the educated classes and the peasants. The last named class, it was supposed, were so chained to their miserable conditions, and so intoxicated with admiration for the Little Father, that it was impossible to drive them, by any excesses, into a revolution. Disaffection has found its way into the ranks of the army, and the soldiers can no longer be depended upon to maintain the autocracy in their corrupt and tyrannical government. There are, perhaps, 450,000 Cossacks whose loyalty to the Czar will be the last to be questioned; but disaffection will enter their ranks, as it has entered the masses of the peasants. They have been favored by the Czar, and when that favor is seen to diminish in value to them, they will prove to be what they always have been—self-seekers.

The break-up in Russia is altogether a most interesting phase of a modern tendency, not only against governments, but against class and wealth distinctions. Count Witte has shown considerable firmness in maintaining a middle course, which he believes to be the only safe one for Russia's future welfare. If Count Witte loses his hold upon the revolutionary movement, it will be difficult to imagine to what extent it may go. Russian promises of enlarged liberty, in the past, have been so shamefully disregarded that the socialists and liberals do not give much credence to the manifesto of the Czar. The contentions between Witte and the people run in a circle. Witte says, Be quiet, and you shall have the liberties you are contending for. The people reply by demanding their liberties and saying that when they are given, then will they be stilled. In the meantime, the situation in Russia remains more perplexing than ever.

The Jews in Russia.

The present revolution in Russia has worked a hardship upon the Jews, compared with which the massacre some time ago at Kishineff pales into insignificance. The thousands of Jews that have been mercilessly slaughtered in Odessa and other southern cities of Russia, as well as in Besarabia; the shameful outrages perpetrated against womanhood, and the savage treatment of little children, constitute one of the most horrible pictures of inhu-

manity ever known since the dawn of our present civilization. Pouring oil upon human beings and setting fire to them, reminds one of Nero's days, when burning Christians was a favorite pastime.

At the very time when the Russian people are guilty of these outrages against the Jews, Russia joins the great powers, and sends a war vessel to the Turkish waters, in order to compel the Sultan to accede to their demands for better treatment to his Christian subjects of Macedonia, and to put his finances of that province under international control. No wonder Abdul Hamid exclaimed: "However ill my Bashibazuks may have treated my Christian subjects, they have not treated them so ill as the Czar's Christian Cossacks have treated the Czar's Jews!"

The responsibility for the wholesale massacres of the Jews is quite generally attributed to the city and provincial authorities of Russia; a class of officials who prefer to see the present government and condition of affairs continue. They belong to those reactionaries who would throw every possible discredit upon the revolution now going on in Russia, their purpose being to convince the conservative and moderately liberal element that any change in the present government of Russia means anarchy. There is always a very large class among the Russians whose fanatical intolerance of the Jews has been kept alive as a sort of protection against Jewish aggressions in commerce, and against Jewish demands for enlarged privileges.

It may be that some responsibility attaches to the organization in Russia known as the Jewish Bund, many of whose members have been active revolutionists, and a few of whom have been among the most radical socialists; but the root of the difficulty is to be found in the racial hatred that has been kept alive for centuries against the Jewish people. There are, today, something like 5,000,000 Jews in Russia. They are mostly located within what is known as the "pale," that is, within Poland, and the western part of Russia, adjoining Poland. Their forefathers left Germany nine centuries ago; and Russia has kept them as much as possible from the districts in which St. Petersburg and Moscow are situated. The Jews, therefore, have expanded naturally towards the

south until they have become quite numerous about the shores of the Black Sea.

Since the Zionist movement began, the opponents of the Jews in the Czar's empire have undertaken to create the impression that the Zionists really meant to have western Russia as their home, rather than Palestine, and that the move in the direction of Palestine was really a disguise. The sentiment, therefore, in Russia against Zionism has been strong, and the government has forbidden the Jews to propagate the Zionist ideas within the empire. It can, therefore, be easily imagined what the prejudice against Zionism would do among the Russians who live within the Jewish "pale," as that district has only about one-eighth of its population Jewish.

HOPE'S REALIZATION.

Brown autumn's gone with all its gladness,
With all its beauties rich and sweet;
Now winter comes with gentle sadness,
And lays the snow beneath our feet.
A snowy pall now hides the flowers,
And keeps them from our longing eyes;
The fairest blossoms of earth's bowers
Are blighted now, 'neath winter's skies.

Yet will the genial glow of spring
Revive the spirit of the flowers;
Again their fragrance sweet will bring
Fond memories of happier hours.
Thus, in life's precious spring of gladness,
When skies are clear, our flowers bloom;
Then winter comes, with dreary sadness,
To lay them neath her snowy tomb.

Oft with the flowers our loved ones perish,
At winter's chill they droop and die;
Those darling ones we loved to cherish,
Now in their silent graves must lie.
Still, as the sunbeams raise the flowers,
And bring them back to life again,
The blessed King will bring us ours,
When he returns on earth to reign.

ANNIE G. LAURITZEN.

Richfield, Utah.

EDITOR'S TABLE.

GREETINGS FROM THE FIRST PRESIDENCY.

From the Christmas Deseret News.

We hail with pleasure the advent of another Christmas day, celebrated throughout Christendom as the anniversary of the birth into this life of the world's Redeemer. We regard and venerate him as the Christ, the veritable Son of the Eternal Father. To the Latter-day Saints we extend cordial greeting at this festive season, and congratulate them on the condition of the Church and its pleasing prospects. In temporal things, our people in these valleys of the mountains have been greatly blessed. Bountiful harvests have been reaped on field and farm, in orchard and garden and vineyard. The flocks and herds upon the hills and the ranges have been multiplied; most of the industries that have been established have flourished; comfortable homes greet the eye in every direction, and want and penury are little known among the Saints. For these favors of divine providence we ought to be truly grateful; but in addition to these good things which are material, there has been an increase of spiritual life and unity, resulting from an increased faith in God and confidence in his servants. It is delightful to behold the peace and joy and contentment to be found throughout Zion, and the determination exhibited to hold fast to the truths which our heavenly Father has revealed in the latter days, and to the spiritual kingdom he has set up "to be thrown down no more forever."

In all the quorums of the holy priesthood and in the auxiliary organizations there is a marked increase of interest, intelligent inquiry and intense satisfaction. The efficiency displayed by the presid-

ing officers among them is evident to all observers. The influence of education is also apparent; the Church academies, colleges and universities show marked improvement, being aided far more liberally than ever before from Church funds; musical culture is progressing; order is maintained in public gatherings, and advancement is seen on both intellectual and spiritual lines.

One striking evidence of the faith of the Saints is their fidelity in the payment of tithes, and the offerings for the poor, in the erection of substantial and elegant houses of worship, in the maintenance of missions, and the support given generally to all measures for the spread of the work of the Lord. Our people are gradually following the advice given to "get out of debt." It is confidently hoped that the Church itself will, before long, be free from the bonded indebtedness which has been a burden upon it for some time. It will be glad tidings to us all, if by the next Christmas day we can declare truthfully that "we owe no man anything, but to love one another."

The Church abroad is strengthening its hold upon the thinking portion of mankind, prejudice is being removed from the minds of good people. Substantial meeting houses have been erected at several points, and the way is opening up for the promulgation of the gospel in many lands, some of which have been barred against our elders. There are openings for our missionaries too numerous to fill at present. The cry is repeated, as of old, "The harvest is great, but the laborers are few."

The unveiling of the monument to the Prophet Joseph Smith, at Sharon, Windsor county, Vermont, on December 23—the one hundredth anniversary of his birth—is a cause of great congratulation to all who believe in his divine mission. Slander, false witness and the shafts of malice are arrayed against the Church and its authorities, as may be expected until Satan is bound and falsehood is conquered by divine truth. It is our duty to bear such things with patience, and not permit ourselves to be aroused to anger or retaliation. We should stand up for the right, and as far as possible ignore the wrong-doers. The knowledge that God is with us, and that his work will prevail, should buoy us up under every difficulty and every trial, having the conviction that the Lord will cause even "the wrath of man to praise him." The very efforts

of the enemies of his Church to hedge up its way will be overruled by him to accelerate its advancement.

We advise the Saints to enjoy as far as is possible and consistent the pleasures of Christmas time, with that temperance and regard for others which should be observed at this sacred anniversary. Bless the children; provide for the poor; comfort the distressed; visit the widow and the fatherless; forgive those who may be regarded as enemies; be filled with the spirit of blessing; have charity for all; promote peace and good will, and spread abroad the light and intelligence which flow down from heaven in the gospel of the Son of God; recognize his divine hand in all that is good and useful and that promotes the welfare of humanity. All truth, from whatever source it seems to emanate, in science, in art, in philosophy, in theology, in discovery or invention, which promotes happiness and elevates mankind, is from the Father of light who sent his Son Jesus Christ of Nazareth, into the world to uplift his sons and daughters and bring them out of darkness, ignorance and sin into communion with him and obedience to his laws. Glory and praise be unto him for this great and crowning mercy! Let all nations join in the glad refrain which was sung by the angels at the Savior's birth.

We extend greeting and blessing and earnest desire for the favor of heaven to rest upon all the human family, with the fervent hope that the time is not far distant when they will bow the knee to King Immanuel and sing with united voice, Glory to God and the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen.

JOSEPH F. SMITH,
JOHN R. WINDER,
ANTHON H. LUND,
First Presidency.

NOT UNDERSTOOD.

President Joseph F. Smith,

EDITOR IMPROVEMENT ERA.

MY DEAR SIR:—I enclose a favorite poem of mine, entitled, "*Not Understood.*" I have recited it many times during the past

five years, especially so during my recent trips in the East. It is very applicable to the question of Utah and the "Mormons," and the ignorance prevailing amongst the eastern people, concerning them. I have had many requests for the poem from all classes of people, especially from the "Mormon" missionaries. Being unable to furnish a copy to each applicant, I thought best to send it to you, as editor of the IMPROVEMENT ERA, and would respectfully suggest its publication in your valuable magazine.

The many friends who have requested, and thousands of others, will then secure it, and in so doing some of the mists that befog the minds of the people concerning Utah may be rolled away:

NOT UNDERSTOOD.

Not understood. We move along asunder,
Our paths grow wider as the seasons creep
Along the years; we marvel, and we wonder
Why life is life, and then we fall asleep;
Not understood.

Not understood. We gather false impressions
And hug them closer as the years go by,
Till virtues often seem to us transgressions;
And thus men rise and fall and live and die;
Not understood.

Not understood. Poor souls with stunted vision
Oft measure giants by their narrow gauge.
The poisoned shafts of falsehood and derision
Are oft impelled 'gainst those who mold the age,
Not understood.

Not understood. The secret springs of action,
Which lie beneath the surface and the snow,
Are disregarded; with self-satisfaction
We judge our neighbors as they often go;
Not understood.

Not understood. How trifles often change us.
The thoughtless sentence or the fancied slight
Destroy long years of friendship, and estrange us,
And on our souls there falls a freezing blight;
Not understood.

Not understood. How many breasts are aching,
 For lack of sympathy? Ah, day by day,
 How many cheerless, lonely hearts are breaking,
 How many noble spirits pass away?
 Not understood.

O, God, that men would see a little clearer,
 Or judge less harshly where they cannot see;
 O, God, that men would draw a little nearer
 To one another, they'd be nearer thee;
 And understood.

I am very respectfully,

JOHN P. MEAKIN.

P. S.—I know not the author of this poem.

Salt Lake City, Nov. 25, 1905.

BEHAVIOR—A SUBJECT FOR THE NEW YEAR.

Now and then complaints are heard from the Sabbath schools, the Improvement associations, and the Saints generally, that there is serious want of reverence on the part of some of the children. Complaint is made that there are boys, and also girls, who appear to have no conception of what is considered honorable conduct, nor a clear understanding or regard for that which is sacred. Teachers complain that these children disturb meetings, and detract attention from the consideration of the studies in hand. They not only annoy the teachers, disturb classmates and meetings, and tumble over benches, but, by other rude ways, give evidence that they have not that training and good breeding that should characterize the children of the Latter-day Saints. This applies especially to certain classes in the Sunday schools and Improvement associations; and teachers complain that it is almost impossible to control the boys, in a number of instances. They appear to let themselves loose to mischief and rude conduct, and pay little attention to the wishes or desires of the teachers and others in charge. They disregard all rules and regulations.

A question was asked of a mother, by her little girl, the other day: "Why is it that there is not as good order in our Church association meetings, as in the day schools?" To which the mother replied: "Because, in the day schools the children are compelled to abide by the strict rules and regulations of the schools, or swift punishment, appropriate to the offense, is inflicted while in our Church organizations and meetings, only love and reverence govern and control." That is true; and the result is that those children who are indifferent and ill-bred, give vent to their rowdyism, knowing that they are secure from punishment. They resent correction, and are often sustained in their actions by their parents. As a result, the workers in our organizations avoid being as firm as they should be, for fear of driving the children away. There is a feeling in their hearts that it is better to have them present, even if disorderly, and in a measure incorrigible, than not to have them present at all; hence, good order, discipline, strict obedience, and good conduct are absent from some of our classes and associations.

The parents, too, in some cases, seem to think that it is a favor to the workers of our organizations, to have their children attend, or have them perform any service required of them; and this same notion extends also to attendants at sacrament meetings, and Church gatherings in general. People who attend seem easily hurt, and it happens that if they do not have their own way, they are injured in feeling, and refuse to come to meeting or to take part in religious affairs. They seem to think they are favoring some worker when they perform the religious obligations required of them, when the truth is just the opposite. No person can afford to neglect his religious duties; and rather than doing the workers and leaders a favor by attending to his duties, the neglectful person himself is seriously injured by not heeding them. The right way to look at it is for every person to say: I cannot afford to ignore Church labors and requirements. There is often too much begging people to have them do their duties; and it were better if the feeling could be changed, so that the begging would be on the other side. Our organizations are made too cheap, and are too easy of access. There appears to be too much done by the interested workers, and too little by those who should be interested,

and for whom the organizations are especially established—the young men and women—the boys and girls of Zion.

A serious trouble, also, is that parents are too apt to justify and excuse their children as against the just complaint of teachers and workers. In this lies the origin of the evil. Then there is not always the control in the home that there should be. There is lack of reverence for sacred things, for holy places, for right living, and for the principles of the gospel. All these are practically learned, and founded in the children's hearts, in the home. When there is want of appreciation as well as discipline, on the part of parents, and where they fail to impress the children with the sacredness and value of religious work, we may scarcely look for these qualities in the children. On the other hand, if parents were more careful, more earnest, more determined, these same characteristics would be implanted in the hearts of the children, and there would soon be manifest a love for sacred things, proper regard and respect for religious places of worship, as well as for the workers, and those who preside in the organizations of the Church.

Where does the responsibility for the indifference and carelessness, lack of appreciation, and training, of the children, lie? Not only with every father and mother in the land, but with every stake president, every high councillor, every bishop, and every leading teacher. These must necessarily bear each his portion of the responsibility for these conditions. As a slogan for the New Year, it is good for the Priesthood of the Church to consider this subject, and to labor with fathers and mothers for the betterment of the conduct of our children.

But where shall we begin? Parents may begin by seconding the efforts of the children in that which is good and right and by firmly decrying that which is incorrect and wrong. Parents may accompany their children to sacrament meetings, to Sabbath schools, to improvement meetings; and, above all, they may teach their children by word and act proper regard for authority, for teachers and for sacred things. This must begin in the home. Here no child should be permitted to disregard the rights of his elders, his brothers, his sisters, or his playmates.

Parents who learn to take an interest with their children in

that which is noble and good, and who lead, teach, and train them in a practical way, will soon see beneficial results. If a child, as he grows up, is taught to strictly respect and regard the rights of others in the home, and to be amenable to authority, he will naturally continue in that course. This class of teaching is quite as necessary as doctrinal knowledge; and is far more needful than business training. We can not go on neglecting it, and still hope to make the children of Zion strong and worthy leaders in the world; for no person who fails to respect others can have proper respect for himself.

I wish fathers and mothers would take this matter up in their home teaching and conduct; I wish stake presidents would speak of it in their priesthood meetings; and that ward bishops would consider it in their meetings with their ward workers. Finally, let us all work unitedly together for better conduct, for more regard for each other, and for improvement in all good works. As parents, we must begin the work, otherwise, the generation that follows will be worse than the present; even if we are not perfect, there is a chance that by teaching correct principles to our children and practicing them as far as we can, they may become better than we are. The present generation will pass away, but as each succeeding generation enters the stage of action, there must be an improvement in every good word and work.

JOSEPH F. SMITH.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

On Blessing Children at Home.

Have members holding the priesthood the right to bless their children at home, and hand the record of such blessing to the ward clerk; or is it their duty to take the children to the Fast-meeting to be blessed, and the record taken there?

It is perfectly proper and right for members to bless their children at home, and keep a record of such blessing; but it is a requirement of the Church, that the child should also be taken before the ward authorities to be blessed. We call special attention to section 20, paragraph 70, of the Doctrine and Covenants:

Every member of the Church of Jesus Christ, having children, is to bring

them unto the elders before the Church, who are to lay there hands upon them in the name of Jesus Christ, and bless them in his name.

The bishop of the ward is, therefore, perfectly justified in requiring that children shall be brought before the ward in Fast-meeting to be blessed. This, however, does not prevent parents from having their children blessed at home; in fact, such blessing is commendable, and we think should be given by every parent in Zion, and a record thereof kept in the family. The wisdom of having the blessing done before the Church, is apparent when one thinks of the value of having a public record thereof.

THE MEMORIAL NUMBER OF THE ERA.

Dr. John A. Widtsoe writes of the December ERA: "In truth I can say that, with the exception of one article, of which, of course, I am not competent to speak, the contents forms the finest tribute published by the Church to the memory of the Prophet. I am reading it carefully, page by page, and I am enjoying every paragraph." A subscriber of Heber, writes: "I think the December number of the ERA one of the finest you have ever issued; it is highly commendable." We have received hundreds of similar compliments from our readers. We have a few extra copies left, and can fill orders at 25 cents each as long as they last.

MINUTE BOOK.

At the last general M. I. A. conference, it was decided to print a minute-book form. This minute-book is now ready, and is just what the secretaries of the ward organizations need for their work. It will save them time, is very handy, and convenient. It will be mailed to any address for 25 cents. The attention of officers is called to this book. The General Secretary, 214 Templeton Building, Salt Lake City, will fill any order sent in. To save time and bookkeeping, the cash should accompany the order.

NEW BOOKS.

One Hundred Years of Mormonism.

The most pretentious literary work celebrating the one-hundredth anniversary of the Prophet Joseph Smith's birth, is the recently published 500-page History of the Church, by John Henry Evans, Ph. B., instructor in Church History at the L.

D. S. University, Salt Lake City. The time and care expended in its preparation (the author has been engaged in its construction for more than five years) is in itself a guarantee of its value. The long experience of the author in teaching has enabled him to select essentials wisely, and to place prominently in the foreground of the narrative, the main facts and the vital points; and, more important than all, to present them in charming style and captivating manner. It is a book to be read, rather than to be referred to, though this is no reflection either upon its accuracy, or the value and volume of its information. Its grouping of historical facts is inviting, and the simplicity of the language makes it attractive reading for young people for whom the book was primarily prepared. It must also be stated that the spirit of the book, from cover to cover, is in strict harmony with the noble souls who sacrificed their lives and labors to found the Church and to make the history which the author has so pleasingly related.

Blood Atonement and the Origin of Plural Marriage.

This is the title of a book of 112 pages issued recently from the *Deseret News* publishing house. It is a discussion, by correspondence, between Elder Joseph F. Smith, Jr., and Mr. Richard C. Evans, second counselor in the Presidency of the "Reorganized Church." The work is valuable as clearly and strongly setting forth the belief of the Latter-day Saints upon these doctrines. It establishes, also, the fraudulent origin of the Reorganized Church, and explains some facts regarding its history that clearly prove its spurious origin. It is a most valuable work for missionaries and others who desire information that will enable them to reply effectively to misrepresentations of enemies of the Church on these subjects.

MESSAGES FROM THE MISSIONS.

[Under this heading the ERA will devote this page to short, pithy paragraphs from the mission fields. We invite contributions from the elders in all the world. This is a good place to record important events, and we trust the missionaries will make this department very interesting.—EDITORS.]

THE *Elders' Journal* gives particulars of the building of a meeting-house in Jacksonville, Florida, by the missionaries and saints of that conference. The movement began in the fall of 1904, and a finely finished meeting-house, with a handsome tower and vestibule, is the result. Excepting the mason work, the building has been constructed by Elders Elmer B. Mecham, Wilford Whittaker, A. M. Palmer, A. G. Burton, G. A. Phippen, and a brother Adams. "They pulled off their preachers' clothes, put on overalls and jumpers, and did every bit of the carpenter work, even to building the pulpit and painting the building, inside and out. It was a sermon to the people of Jacksonville, that many of them never tire of talking about,—to see the preachers of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ

handle the saw and the hammer, and build a church from the ground to the steeple, —it was something that opened their eyes. The house as completed cost a little over \$2,000. It is insured for \$1,000.” In this connection, it is interesting to note that a new house was recently built in like manner at Loma, Colorado, and the West Colorado Conference was held in it November 18, and 19, 1905.

ELDER GEORGE M. JORGENSEN, the secretary of the Danish-Norwegian Mission relates in a recent report that there are M. I. A. organizations in six conferences in Norway and Denmark. Mission President Christensen has lately visited the conferences and found the associations in full working order. About 290 souls were baptized in the mission from January to November, 1905.

ELDER WILFORD J. KNUDSEN, of Provo, died in St. Joseph's hospital, Copenhagen, Friday, November 3, 1905, from tuberculosis, and his body was shipped home November 8, in charge of Elder Nephi Jensen, who arrived in Utah, December 2. Elder Knudsen left Utah for his mission, April 19, 1904, having been set apart by Elder J. Golden Kimball, the day previous, and he labored in Trondhjem, Norway, until he took sick, and was sent to the hospital in Copenhagen, March 16, 1905. He was the son of Herman and Amanda Everet Knudsen of Provo, and was born in Provo, January 7, 1883. He was an attendant at the B. Y. U. missionary course in 1901-3, and both at home and abroad showed much devotion to the cause of God.

FOR MANY years there have been only four conferences in Sweden—Stockholm, Goteborg, Sundsvall and Malmo. On October 24, 1905, a new conference—Norrköping—was formed by Mission-President P. Matson, in the central part of the country, including the branches, Norrkoping, Vingakar, Vestervick and Kalmar, the first-named being the headquarters, with Elder Carl P. Anderson, the first conference president. There are 61 elders laboring in Sweden, and during October, there were eight baptisms, and 256 meetings held.

ON WEDNESDAY, November 25, the Circuit Court grand jury, of Greenville, Tenn., refused to indict the leaders of a mob who brutally assaulted Elders F. J. Sorenson and Olaf Jensen, in May, 1905, stating that they “recognized no law for ‘Mormons.’” The prosecuting attorney was indignant, as his evidence was conclusive.

ELDER CHARLES M. BELL of the Norwich conference writes to the *Millennial Star* of a case of healing which occurred recently at North Walsham. He states that a lady who had been investigating the gospel was taken seriously ill, suffering from pleurisy and inflammation of the lungs. She had been given up by the doctor, but she asked the elders to administer to her, which they did. She immediately began to improve, and was soon able to be about again—much to the astonishment of the doctor and the nurse.

ELDER MARTIN I. BUSHMAN, Ipswich, England, writes: “The IMPROVEMENT ERA is a most welcome visitor to all the elders, and we use it in spreading the gospel. Our investigators say, it is edited in a most readable manner, and they enjoy reading it. God bless you in your efforts.”

IN LIGHTER MOOD.

"Mama" said a small girl, "If I get married when I grow up will I have a husband like papa?"

"Yes, dear," was the answer.

"And if I don't get married shall I be an old maid like Aunt Sarah?"

"Why, yes, dear, you probably will," replied her mother.

The little girl sighed. "Well, no matter what we do," she said, "it's a pretty hard world for us women, isn't it?"

An American, touring in the country with an English friend, stopped to point out to him a sign-post, on which some wag had printed this sign:

"This way to Squedunk. Those who cannot read apply at the blacksmith's opposite."

The American roared with laughter, but the Englishman looked puzzled. After they had returned home that night the Englishman came into his host's room roaring with laughter.

"Ah," he said, "I see the joke now—suppose the blacksmith were out?"

Some boy friends of Darwin once plotted a surprise for the great naturalist. Capturing a centipede, they glued on to it a beetle's head, the wings of a butterfly, and the long legs of a grasshopper. Then putting the creature in a box, they took it to Darwin, and asked him what it could be, explaining that they had caught it in the fields. Darwin looked it over carefully.

"Did it hum when you caught it?" he asked.

"Oh yes, sir," they answered, nudging one another, "it hummed like everything,"

"Then," said the philosopher, "it is a humbug."—*Harper's Weekly*.

"Say, Pat, can you tell me where the Rockefeller building is?"

"An' how did yez know me name were Pat?"

"Guessed it."

"Ye're good at guessin', sor?"

"Fine."

"Thin guess where th' Rockefeller building is."—*Cleveland Leader*.

A certain editor was visited in his office by a ferocious-looking military gentleman, who exclaimed, excitedly, as he entered:

"That notice of my death in your paper today is a lie, sir. I'll horsewhip you in public, sir, if you don't apologize in your next issue."

The next day the editor inserted the following apology:

"We extremely regret to announce that the paragraph in our issue of yesterday, which stated that Colonel Brimstone was dead, is without foundation."—*Harper's Weekly*.

OUR WORK.

CONJOINT M. I. A. CONFERENCES, 1905-6.

The following dates have been named for the annual M. I. A. conferences. While the General Board aims to have a representation at as many conferences as possible, it is by no means certain that a representative will be at each of these gatherings. The Board has decided to visit by representative the annual conventions which are held in the fall, and to have a representative at each of them; but for these conferences the Board desires that the stake superintendency of each stake shall take upon themselves the responsibility of conducting them, in the best manner that their ingenuity, originality, and experience may dictate. The responsibility for the successful conduct of the stake conferences devolves upon the superintendent and his assistants. They should consult with the Young Ladies' officers, and provide for one-half the time to be occupied by the Young Men, and one-half by the Young Ladies. What program is to be carried out they must decide. It should, however, in a general way, be indicative of the work of the associations, interspersed with music, reports and instructions.

In case no representative of the General Board is present at a conference, the superintendent is requested to make out a report, and forward it to the General Secretary for presentation to the General Board. The report blanks for this purpose have been distributed, and will give an idea of the items that the Board desires reported upon.

It is designed by the General Board, to place more responsibility upon the stake officers, and to hold them responsible, not only for the success of the work in the associations, but also for the success of the stake general work:

December 10	Emery, Juab, Malad, Parowan
December 17	Hyrum, Panguitch, Beaver
December 31.....	South Davis
January 14.....	North Davis, Big Horn
January 21.....	Jordan, Bear Lake, Box Elder, Wasatch, Bingham
January 28.....	Benson, Alpine, Oneida, South Sanpete, Granite, Millard
February 11.....	Morgan, North Sanpete, Teton, Tooele
February 18.....	San Luis, Pocatello, Sevier, Union
February 25.....	Star Valley, Bear Lake, Cache, Ensign, Fremont, Utah
March 11.....	Nebo, Blackfoot, Taylor
March 18.....	Salt Lake, Alberta, Liberty, Pioneer

March 25..... Bannock, Cassia, Woodruff, Summit
 May 20..... Weber

Snowflake, St. John's, Maricopa, St. Joseph, and Juarez stakes will arrange for their own dates, and notify the General Boards.

Kanab, San Juan, Uintah, Wayne and St. George stakes will hold conferences in connection with the Stake Conferences.

EDWARD H. ANDERSON,
 Gen'l Sec. Y. M. M. I. A.
 ANN M. CANNON,
 Sec. Y. L. M. I. A.

JOSEPH F. SMITH,
 Gen'l Supt. Y. M. M. I. A.
 MARTHA H. TINGEY,
 Prest. Y. L. M. I. A.

THE ANNUAL M. I. A. FUND.

Enough envelopes were mailed in November, to the stake superintendents of the Y. M. M. I. A., for distribution to all the Mutual Improvement Associations of each stake, for use in returning the Improvement Fund. Stake superintendents have no doubt promptly distributed these envelopes to the presidents of their associations who doubtless gave an envelope to each member thereof, in time for the day set for collecting the Improvement fund, during the first week of December.

It is hoped that all arrangements have been completed for the prompt and efficient gathering of this fund. Officers will remember that there is a second collection week, during the first week in February, at which time those who were not reached in December should be solicited to contribute to the fund. The envelopes sent were sufficient for both collections.

The presidents should take notice that all remittances of the fund should be sent to the stake superintendency of their stake, or to whomsoever the superintendency may designate to attend to this business. Remittances from wards should not be sent to the General Secretary, but directly to the superintendency of the stakes. When the returns from the associations are received by the stake officers, the amounts should be promptly remitted to the General Secretary with a list of the wards and amount paid in each case.

CHANGE IN SECRETARIES.

At the meeting of the General Board Y. M. M. I. A., held Wednesday, November 1, 1905, the resignation of Elder Thomas Hull as General Secretary Y. M. M. I. A., and assistant manager of the IMPROVEMENT ERA was accepted; and Elder Edward H. Anderson was appointed to fill the vacancies. All communications for M. I. A., or IMPROVEMENT ERA, should be addressed, and checks and money orders made payable to Edward H. Anderson, 214 Templeton Building, Salt Lake City, Utah.

EVENTS AND COMMENTS.

BY EDWARD H. ANDERSON.

Lesson of the Life of Hirini Whaanga.—A character worthy of special notice was Hirini Whaanga, a chief of the Maories, who died at the L. D. S. Hospital, on the morning of October 17, 1905. He was baptized by Elder J. C. Stewart, in 1882, having been one of the first to welcome, shelter and obtain an audience for the elders of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, in the New Zealand mission. He was born on the eastern coast of New Zealand, in 1828, and was the son of Ihaka Whaanga, a descendant of a long line of Chiefs of the Ngatikahungunu tribe of Maoris, the strongest tribe of the island. Hirini succeeded his father as chief; and was in command when Latter-day Saint elders arrived in 1882, under charge of William T. Stewart, and William Paxman who was the first president of Zion's Maori Association. As the converted chief began to understand the gospel better, he expressed a wish to come to Zion to perform temple work for his ancestors, and accordingly came to Utah, in 1894, settling first in Kanab, but a year later in Salt Lake City, where he has resided and been a worker in the temple ever since, excepting one year. It was in 1898 that he went to his native country to preach the gospel and gather genealogies. He was met by his people and accorded every honor due a king. He returned in 1899, having traveled on horseback on a tour of the island, preaching in almost every settlement, and bearing a faithful testimony to the truth of the Gospel. Before he came to Utah, he built a home for the entertainment of the missionaries whom he always made welcome, and many converts were made through his assistance. The members of the Church now number over four thousand natives. Zion's Maori Association built him a home in Salt Lake City, as a return for his kindness, and here he resided to the end. Here also his wife, Mere Whaanga, a grandchild, a sister-in-law, two nephews and a niece, still reside. Three married daughters survive him in New Zealand. The missionaries did all that could be done for a dear friend, during his last days. They took charge of his funeral and, with mourning and deep esteem, on Sunday 22nd, laid his body to rest in the cemetery. When the news of his passing reaches New Zealand, thousands will celebrate the mourning service for the dead, for his people still revered him as a chief and a leader.

His life affords a remarkable lesson. A king content to live in a strange land, and with strange people as a humble member of the Church of Christ! Surely

Hirini Whaanga preferred the riches of eternal life, before the wealth of this earth, and the honors of men.

Died.—Friday, October 6th, in Grantsville, Jane Palmer, a veteran of the Church, born August 6, 1820.—Monday, 9th, in Monroe, John B. Bowman, a pioneer of Monroe, born December 2, 1831, in Sweden.—Tuesday, 10th, in Garden City, Rich county, Rebecca Saxon, a pioneer of that place, aged 78 years.—The same day, in Salt Lake City, Thomas Teakle, an active elder in the Salt Lake Stake was accidentally killed.—Friday, 13th, in Willard, Charlotte Cole, a Nauvoo veteran, who received the Gospel in Herefordshire, while President Woodruff was laboring there. She was born August 9, 1820.—The same day, in Moroni, Charles Kemp, a pioneer settler of Sanpete county, aged 74 years.—Wednesday, 18th, in Salt Lake City, Thomas Jenkins, a High Priest in the Pioneer Stake, who for many years presided over the Fourth Ward. He was a pioneer of 1848, and was born in Herefordshire, September 18, 1829.—Wednesday, 23rd, in Salt Lake City, Robert C. McEwan, born in Scotland, June 2, 1856.—Tuesday, 24th, in Bountiful, John Fisher, born in Woolwich, England, February 7, 1842, and a veteran of the Black Hawk war.—In Provo, the same day, Daniel C. Leavitt, born Wheelock, Vermont, April 28, 1823.—The body of Lauritz Lauritzen, a member of the Church, was found on the hill north of Salt Lake City, where he had died, or had been murdered several months before.—Wednesday, 25th, in Salt Lake City, Mary Evans Jeremy, a pioneer of Salt Lake City, born August 2, 1827, in South Wales, joined the Church in 1850.—Thursday, 31st, in Salt Lake City, Emma J. Timmins, aged 78 years, and a veteran of the Church.

How to Keep Well.—Among other things, Elbert Hubbard is a doctor. His father before him has practiced medicine for sixty-five years. He says, in a recent magazine article, that he and his father stand solid as one man on the following facts on "How to Keep Well."

Most diseases are the result of medication which has been prescribed to relieve and remove a beneficent warning symptom on the part of nature.

Most of the work of doctors in the past has been to treat symptoms; the difference between a disease and a symptom being something the average man does not even yet know.

The people you see waiting in the lobbies of doctors' offices are, in a vast majority of cases, suffering through poisoning caused by an excess of food. Coupled with this go the bad results of imperfect breathing, improper use of stimulants, lack of exercise, irregular sleeps or holding the thought of fear, jealousy and hate. All of these things, or any one of them, will in very many persons, cause fever, chills, congestion, cold feet and faulty elimination.

To administer drugs to a man suffering from malnutrition caused by a desire to "get even," and a lack of fresh air, is simply to compound his troubles, shuffle his maladies and shift his pain from one place to another, getting him ripe for the ether-cone and scapel.

The one theme of Ecclesiastes is moderation. Buddha wrote it down that the greatest word in any language was equanimity. William Morris said the finest blessing of life was systematic, useful work. St. Paul declared the greatest thing in the world was love. Moderation, Equanimity, Work and Love—let these be your physicians, and you will need no other.

How a King Was Made.—After Sweden decided at the conference of Karl-

stad to let Norway withdraw from the union, little time was lost by the Norwegian Storting in providing for a new ruler. Early in November it adopted a proposal, by a vote of 87 to 29, providing that, after the ratification of the choice by a plebiscite, or general male vote of the people, Prince Charles of Denmark should be asked to accept election as King of Norway. The vote was taken November 13, 1905, and the choice was ratified by a vote of more than four to one. On the 18th, the Storting, in accordance with the will of the people expressed in the referendum, elected Prince Charles of Denmark to be King of the Norwegians; the chaplain of the chamber invoked a blessing upon King, government and country, and a salute of 42 guns was fired. On the following Monday, a deputation headed by President Berner of the Storting, went to Copenhagen where they were received by King Christian IX, in the same room of his palace, where, in 1863, the crown of Greece was offered to Prince George. Charles is a grandson of the old Danish King, and is 35 years old. The delegation was kindly received, and among other things the old King said, addressing the men of Norway:

It has pleased us to accede to the desire of the Norwegian people that we accept the ancient crown of Norway for our dear grandson, Prince Charles. We cherish full confidence that the Norwegian people, in common with him, have a happy future in store for them. The young King does not come as a stranger to Norway, for he claims relationship to former Norwegian kings. Nor will the Kingdom of Norway be strange to him, for everywhere in the land common recollections of the history of the kingdom and the history of his race will meet him.

He then bade Godspeed to King Haakon VII, by which title the new King will be known, and to Queen Maud, his wife who was born in 1869, and who is the youngest daughter of the King of England, and said to them:

You, my dear grandson, have here served your Fatherland and King with loyalty. Therefore I am convinced that you will enter on your new and responsible task with good intent. Fill worthily your place and your father and mother, your whole race, the land of the Danish people, and I, your old King and grandfather, will all celebrate this solemn hour with warm feelings. Go with God, my dear grandchildren, from the land and race that bore you to the land and people which have called you, and take the blessing with you of your old King for you, your race, and your deeds now and forever. Herewith I commend you to God.

On the 25th, the new king entered Christiania having been escorted thither by a fleet of Norwegian, Danish, British and German warships. At noon, 27th, the King entered the Norwegian parliament, with the queen on his left arm, surrounded by their suites. Bowing to the president, the two ascended the tribune, where the King seated himself on the throne, the queen beside him in a chair. A brief address was delivered by President Berner, whereupon the King took the prescribed oath to support the constitution. In a subsequent speech his majesty announced as his motto: *All For Norway*. Many congratulatory telegrams were received, and this one from King Oscar of Sweden, the former ruler of Norway:

In thanking your Majesty for the telegram announcing your accession to the throne of Norway, I beg that you be persuaded that every effort looking to good

relations between our two countries will be given a sympathetic reception on my part.

It is generally thought that if "the right of kings" had been less pronounced in Europe, the people of Norway, who are perhaps the most independent of any in Europe, would have elected to become a republic; in fact, it is an open belief that Kaiser Wilhelm, of Germany, fearing such an action, was highly in favor of a kingdom with a Danish prince or king. With Germany and England backing the new King, it is a strong family affair, and everybody seems suited except the disappointed republicans who were so badly beaten. The royal pair have one young son, Prince Alexander, born July 2, 1903, who now becomes Crown Prince Olaf of Norway. Norway has an area of 124,130 square miles, a population of 2,263,000 souls, a revenue of \$23,000,000 annually, and a public debt of a little over \$71,000,000. The country has many ships, and they earn in foreign trade nearly \$30,000,000 per annum. Little farming is done, and the country does not produce one half the bread-stuff needed to support the people, who are mainly engaged in the lumber business and fishing. Both Sweden and Norway have adopted a new flag. Sweden eliminates its union mark in the upper left hand corner, and returns to its yellow cross on the field of blue, as it stood prior to 1814. So ends the long but bloodless conflict between the "brother folk," and a new kingdom, after five centuries under foreign rulers, enters upon its career, with the formal coronation of its own King, set for July 27, 1906.

Died.—Wednesday, November 1, in Salt Lake City, Emma Sharkey, who crossed the plains in 1852; born in Birmingham, November 11, 1831.—Tuesday, 7th, in Oakland, California, John Taylor Dillworth, a pioneer of 1847.—The same day in Willard, Ulrich Stauffer, a pioneer of Box Elder county, born in Switzerland, March 21, 1838.—Thursday, 9th, in Salt Lake City, Jesse B. Higgs, an active Church worker and second counselor in the Bishopric of the Tenth ward, aged 36 years.—Friday, 10th, in Logan, C. B. Robbins, one of the original settlers of Cache county. He was 71 years of age, and came to Utah in 1848.—Saturday, 11th, in Salt Lake City, Elizabeth Bouck, a hand-cart pioneer; born in South Wales, October 12, 1827.—The same day in Salt Lake City, Jane Carrington Young, wife of the late Apostle Brigham Young, and a pioneer of 1847, born in Hamilton, Wisconsin, February 26, 1840.—In Smoot, Uinta county, Wyoming, Stephen K. Wilcox, a Nauvoo veteran and Utah pioneer (date of death not given.)—Monday, 13th, in Pleasant Grove, James Armstead, a pioneer of that place.—In Bountiful, the same day, Mrs. Samantha Willey, one of the pioneers of Davis county. The same day, in Mount Pleasant, Peter Syndergaard, a pioneer of Sanpete county, aged 65 years.—Tuesday, 14th, in Santaquin, Frederick Wall, Sen., President of the 45th quorum of Seventy.—Wednesday 15th, in Iron County, Mrs. Jane C. Kirbeck, a pioneer of Southern Utah, born in Derby, England, July 13, 1822.—The same day, in Manti, Patriarch J. L. Bench, a pioneer of Sanpete county, born in Devonshire, England, June 29, 1838.—Thursday, 16th, Robert B. Allen, born in Belfast, Ireland, 1821, joined the Church in 1854, and for many years was an active missionary in his native land.—Friday, 17th, in Alpine, Utah, Hannah M. Beck, a pioneer resident of Utah county, aged 82 years.—The same day in

Mount Pleasant, Miles Olsen, a pioneer of Southern Utah, aged 90 years.—Tuesday, 21st, in Salt Lake City, Mary E. Gray, a Church veteran who passed through the trials of Missouri and Illinois. She was born in Canada in 1833.—Wednesday, 22nd, in Ogden, Henrietta Lamont, a pioneer resident of Ogden, born February 4, 1835, and when 16 years of age joined the Church and came to Utah in 1863.—Friday 24th, in Salt Lake City, George Coulam, one of the oldest residents of the city, born in Louth, Lincolnshire, England, May, 1848, and came to Utah with his parents that year.

Death of Patriarch Johnson.—Benjamin F. Johnson, one of the oldest members of the Church, and a Patriarch in the Maricopa Stake of Zion, died in Mesa, Saturday, November 18, in his 88th year. He was born in New York, July 29, 1818, and when thirteen years of age joined the Church. He was closely associated with the Prophet Joseph Smith and family in Missouri and Nauvoo, and from 1842 to 1844 acted as his business agent, and part of the time as his private secretary. During the exodus he was the captain of the first company that left Nauvoo, but did not arrive in Utah until 1849, as the duties assigned to him prevented him from coming at an earlier date. For many years he was an active participant in laying the foundation of the state of Utah; he filled several missions, served in the Utah Indian wars, and, in 1881, was called as a pioneer in Mexico and Arizona. At the time of his death his posterity numbered in the neighborhood of 800 souls.

The Late Elections.—The November elections in the United States were characterized, as usual with non-presidential elections, by the victory of the Democrats, in a large number of the municipalities of the nation. In Utah the election was noted for the winning of the so-called "American" party in Salt Lake City. Ezra Thomson was elected Mayor, and all the general officers of his party went in with him. A Democratic Mayor was elected in Ogden, but the other general officers are Republican. "Boss Rule" received a severe set-back in the large cities of the nation.

New English Liberal Cabinet.—On December 4, Premier Balfour tendered the resignations of himself and the members of his cabinet to King Edward who accepted them, and summoned Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, the Liberal leader, to form a new Cabinet. On the evening of December 10 the new Premier presented to the King the names he had selected for his Cabinet, and received the royal approval. The names he selected are regarded in England, by all parties as a surprisingly strong Ministry; and it is said that he has secured the support of all the factions of the Liberals. The new Cabinet is said to believe in the right of the Irish to govern themselves, and the party is now united on the Home Rule policy which has divided it ever since 1885, when Gladstone declared for it.

Dowie and Zion.—Dowie, the Zionist leader of Chicago, has abdicated in favor of three men known as the Triumvirate, who will manage the affairs of Zion City, hereafter. On the 20th of December, Dowie set sail for an island in the Carribean Sea, so it is said, where he will spend the remainder of his days. He is suffering from nervous troubles.

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